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USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

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USSR REPORT MILITARY AFFAIRS

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ARMED FORCES

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE SCHOOL REFORM PROPOSAL DISCUSSED

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Mar 84 p 2

[Readers comment on school reform proposal: "We Discuss the CPSU Central Committee School Reform Proposal"]

[Text] Youngsters From the Garrison

I read Lieutenant Colonel (Reserve) K. Bykov's observations published in the January 26 issue of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA with some interest. I think his suggestion deserves attention. Since 1956 I've been the director of a school which serves one of the garrisons. There are no industrial enterprises near the school. A pedigreed livestock breeding center, an RTS [no expansion given] and a dairy farm do not provide a suitable foundation upon which to base an industrial production training program. And it would be wrong, in my view, to fail to take account of the fact that each year sees 20-25 of the school's graduates go on to attend military schools. It would be difficult, indeed, to find a school whose students did not include some of our graduates.

We devote a great deal of attention to the military-patriotic education of our students. The school has created a museum devoted to the history of the 3d Independent Communications Regiment of the Red Army Air Force Supreme Command Reserve. For eight years running, now, the rayon committees of the party and Komsomol and the executive committee of the city soviet have awarded the school the Red Challenge Banner for the excellence of the training and preparation it gives its students in readying them for service in the armed forces.

But I think we would be able to do an even better job if our relationship with the military unit which sponsors our school were clarified and placed on a sound legal basis. I am sure that a school contributing a couple of dozen or more new military school students each year really ought to have model facilities in which to conduct activities within the basic military training program, good sports facilities and a range of efficiently organized elective activities designed to help students develop skills which will later make it easier for them to master their military occupational specialties. Sponsors could be helping a lot this way, but while the enterprises have specific instructions and well-defined authority here, the unit does not.

The CPSU Central Committee proposal says that each school should have a base enterprise. This would be hard to arrange in some garrisons. So I think the reform proposal should speak of both base enterprises /and other organizations/ [in bold-face], which will be under obligation to render assistance to schools in providing

students with vocational education, training and counselling. In some instances these could be military units.

A. Men'shikov
school director

When You Know Russian

My military career as a member of a Guards artillery unit took me from Novorossiysk to Prague. Fighting alongside me were Russians and Ukrainians, Azerbaijanis and Armenians, Kazakhs and Uzbeks.... We were united by our own personal responsibility for the fate of our common motherland—the USSR, hatred of the enemy and by the Russian language, so dear to all of us. For us it became the language of victory.

When I returned from the front I enrolled in a pedagogical institute and decided to become a Russian language teacher. So for a number of decades now I've been teaching Georgian children the language of Pushkin and Lermontov, Suvorov and Kutuzov, the language of the immortal Lenin. I use the Russian language to tell my students about my comrades-in-arms and my favorite commanders and commissars.

Georgians can draw from a rich fund of practical experience in the teaching of the Russian language. We have developed a corps of instructors. We have valuable studies in instructional methodology available to us. There are, however, some serious deficiencies here, and these need to be faced up to squarely. The secondary school is not taking full advantage of all the resources it has available to it in this most important area. Sometimes it's the teachers who are lacking in responsibility here, sometimes it's the students.

It think it's vitally important that we take additional steps to improve the conditions under which we undertake to study, in addition to our own language, the Russian language as well, the tool the Soviet people have voluntarily adopted to facilitate intercourse among our nationalities, steps such as have been suggested in the CPSU Central Committee's school reform proposal. /Fluency in the Russian language should be adopted as a standard to be met by all secondary school graduates/ [in boldface].

"Mastery of the Russian language puts you in touch with the entire world," my fellow countryman, the poet I. Grishashvili, has declared. It couldn't be put any better.

I. Badzagua
teacher

Sukhumi

Lessons in Courage

In my view, such forms of military-patriotic education as the lessons in courage we present our school students have entirely proved their vitality and effectiveness. They are presented in virtually all our schools and vocational-technical training facilities and leave a profound impression upon the hearts and minds of our young people. Despite the fact that I have yet to complete my first year as a participant in one of these programs, however, I have already identified some

deficiencies. Students aren't always prepared for their lessons, and they don't know whom they're supposed to be meeting for instruction. A number of different instructors will speak to them, so there's inevitably some repetition and discussions sometimes devoted to subjects which have already been covered.

/Why not include the lessons in courage in the regular schedule of instruction?
[in boldface]. This would make it possible to make preparations ahead of time and to relate a discussion to what the students in a particular class are studying that period. Students could familiarize themselves ahead of time with the career of the particular individual they're going to be meeting. Information like this could be put in the wall newspaper, for example. I think the lessons in courage should be tied in closely with history, with both the past and the present of a particular city, village or rayon.

One other suggestion. /The position of "specialist in military-patriotic education methods" should be established within our public education administration, such specialists also to be responsible for organizing the school sports program.
[in boldface]

A. Kazaryan
Hero of the Soviet Union

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CSO: 1801/276

ARMED FORCES

NAVAL COMMANDER DISCUSSES DISCIPLINE

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Mar 84 p 2

[Article by Captain 1st Rank A. Khraptovich, commander of ship X: "The Price of Covering Up Indiscipline, A Commander's Thoughts"]

[Text] The officers of one of our ships were meeting to discuss ways to tighten up discipline. A representative of higher headquarters was speaking. He quite justifiably criticized a number of the officers for shortcomings in their educational efforts and then turned to the subject of what steps are being taken on other ships to tighten military discipline. The officers listened to the speaker attentively, for they knew that it will always be helpful and instructive to become familiar with the experience of organizations other than one's own. But then from among a large number of ships the staff officer called their attention to the instructive example of a crew which, in his words, really knew how to eliminate instances of gross indiscipline root and branch, and at that point you could hear a groan spread through the auditorium, then words of incomprehension and incredulity.

This particular ship, as it turns out, was berthed right alongside, and many of these officers were only too well informed of the true state of affairs on board. Among other things, they knew that the commander and political officer of the other ship had been trying to hush up a gross breach of discipline among their crew. That's why the staff officer's suggestion that they measure themselves against a "model" like this elicited a response of incredulity.

"Our discipline still isn't what it ought to be, of course," the officers from one of the ships represented at the meeting were saying afterward. "But at least we're making an honorable effort to improve the situation. And if you look at things objectively, we have better discipline in our crew than our neighbors do. Why should anybody else be able to feel like they're 'on top of things'?"

And you cannot deny that this is a legitimate question. Suppose we are talking about only a single case. Let's just think, now: what is a breach of discipline covered up? What is its cost? As far as the negative impact on the moral climate within a collective is concerned, you could perhaps say it was something of a double offense. Any breach of discipline, of course, is a bad thing, something which has to be dealt with mercilessly. But no matter how serious an offense, to bring it out into the open, to discuss it publicly and then to take the appropriate measures to deal with the situation is to create conditions in which it will be possible to overcome the difficulties created by what has happened and

then to draw conclusions to guide future action. The people on the ship the staff officer referred to tried to suppress the problem rather than bring it resolutely into the open. They simply gave no thought to effect an effort to hush up the problem would have on their crew.

This attempt to compromise with the conscience gave many officers pause here. It was recalled that the commander of this ship somehow thought it more legitimate for him to take a single reprimand for hushing up a breach of discipline than to have to listen to a continuous series of reprimands and come under censure for his shortcomings, or to put it more accurately, for his inability to maintain order within his organization.

He very likely developed this attitude because instances of hushing up breaches of discipline have been treated more leniently than they should have. If, however, the party had administered him a severe, principled reprimand the first time he ever attempted such a thing, many years ago perhaps, it would probably have had a salutary effect on his conduct. Leniency on someone else's part in this instance had its effect on the personal character of this officer, and as a result he himself as a teacher and guide had not been able to exercise the proper influence on his own subordinates.

It is not difficult to imagine the difficult atmosphere prevailing among the members of this crew. Those guilty of breaches of military discipline have been identified, of course. Their conduct is now known not only to the commander and political officer, but to many other people as well. The reports headquarters and the political department are receiving from the ship, however, are not entirely objective. But the communists and Komsomol activists remain silent.... The prevailing opinion among crew members, moreover, continues to reflect a will to self-delusion: we've got a good crew here, they say, a bunch that works well together, so why make everybody suffer just because of two or three indisciplined sailors?

Once this kind of thinking has taken root, it no simple matter to uproot it. It is nevertheless essential to do this, to teach people to distinguish between the true interests of the collective and what they perceive to be these interests and to move resolutely to rid the crew of any connivery. Only in this way can we create a genuinely healthy moral atmosphere within the ship collective. An atmosphere in which breaches of discipline and any concealment of these breaches are impossible.

So it is so much the more essential that we be able to demonstrate a universally negative attitude toward attempts to cover up breaches of discipline. I have become convinced of this over the course of my own long period of service. It has always been, just as it is now, easy for me to single out officers who distinguish themselves with their personal integrity and devotion to principle. Let's take Captain 1st Rank A. Samarin and Captain 2d Rank A. Starchak, for example. The better I get to know each of these men, the more I admire their exactingness, their refusal to compromise their principles, the dedication with which they deal with individuals guilty of breaches of discipline. It would be no exaggeration to say that offenders are downright afraid of them, what with the fact that it is generally known that these officers will not tolerate connivery under any circumstances, that they will move boldly to uncover any shortcoming and that they will report openly and unhesitatingly any problem, no matter how painful, which has arisen among their

crews at any level, at any echelon of command. This is because these commanders, men who are continuously spending long periods at sea, are fully aware of how vitally important it is for them to have a healthy, truly cohesive crew in order to be able to insure steady, dependable success in the most challenging tests in peacetime—the trial at sea. On the other hand, however, those who come to shipboard duty for the sake of a few lines in their biographies, for the sake of their careers (and unfortunately, we still have people like this with us, some, even, among our commanders)—this type needs quick success. And to this end, people who are interested first and foremost in their own personal welfare will every now and then be found willing to act against the dictates of their conscience.

No, it's not always easy to report serious breaches of discipline on the part of a subordinate openly and honestly. For the fact is that this will occasionally cause a crew to lose a high standing in competition, a position they will have achieved at the expense of a great deal of effort. It will also happen that an officer will have to take a personal loss—the date he goes to the academy may be set back, or a promotion may be postponed.... But even if the situation isn't always this dramatic, it will still subject a commander to a great deal of moral stress.

That is why it is doubly important that honest, principled, truly self-critical officers get all the support and understanding possible from their superior officers, staffs and political organizations. On the other hand, no report of a particular instance of indiscipline, of course, is going to relieve the officer himself of personal responsibility for it. The very fact that a breach of discipline occurs on board a ship is evidence of deficiencies in either the organization of the shipboard routine or the education and indoctrination of the sailors or both. The situation should be analyzed with the care it deserves. The general atmosphere on board the ship, however, should be one in which people consciously strive to speak of the actual state of affairs among the crews in only the most truthful of terms.

In this connection I cannot continue without mentioning an incident which occurred early on in my career as a commander. A number of sailors from some other crews had been assigned to the ship I had just taken over. Before we had really had a chance to get acquainted with one another, one of the newcomers committed a really serious offense. I reported the incident to my superiors openly and honestly. I wasn't expecting any thanks for this, of course, but I did expect at least some help and advice from some experienced teachers. And this all the more, what with the fact that the sailor who was guilty of this breach of discipline turned out to be one of those we commonly refer to as "difficult." Here's what happened. Before attempting to come to any conclusions, my superior officer called me in to see him, inquired into the situation aboard the ship and promised all possible assistance and support in rectifying the situation. Now I must confess, after this incident I was never again even tempted to refrain from rendering a full and frank account of a situation.

We frequently, and entirely reasonably, talk about how essential to respond quickly and forcefully to any breaches of military discipline. But on the other hand, does this forcefulness, the sharpness of a response, really consist in stirring up a lot of unnecessary dust and needlessly straining the nerves? In overpunishing a commander for the misconduct of a subordinate?

I could, by the way, name the names of some officers who have received no small number of such punishments. V. Kuznetsov and G. Marchuk, for example. There were, it is true, deficiencies to be found in the way they were educating and indoctrinating their men; but now, let's stop and ask ourselves whether it's normal to subject one officer, and yes a high-ranking one, to greater punishment than a poorly disciplined subordinate? And is this kind of disciplinary practice really going to get us much in the way of improvements in our educational and indoctrinational efforts?

The question of the proper selection of criteria on the basis of which to evaluate the state of the military discipline in a particular situation is an exceptionally important one. Some units take the number of gross breaches of discipline as the basis for evaluation here. I have become convinced that this is not always the best approach. Statistics, of course, are very handy things. They are good things to use to illustrate a point in a speech or a report.... If you think about it, though, you realize that the number don't tell everything.

The concept of "gross breach of discipline" itself requires refinement. We use it indiscriminately, but the fact is that it's not to be found in the disciplinary regulations. So what should we in fact be referring to when we use the term? The boundary lines are very indistinct here. And I might add right here that the fuzziness of the concept itself also poses an obstacle to the development of exactingness and an instinctive hostility to the very idea of reconciling oneself to shortcomings.

It will of course be impossible to reject entirely the need to account for violations of regulation requirements, to include so-called "gross breaches." But we should not allow ourselves to get carried away with our quantifications. I am of the opinion here that it is exceptionally important that we take advantage of the fund of practical experience accumulated by unit commanders, staffs and political organs who in the course of their everyday activities attempt to analyze the state of affairs on board a ship as an integrated whole.

To undertake a thorough analysis, say, of the overall level of organization, performance and discipline on the part of the rank and file, the level of exactingness at which their commanders function and the effectiveness of the measures of persuasion and coercion they employ is, of course, quite a difficult thing. It requires much more effort than does simply recording and then arithmetically computing the instances of indiscipline. There is no dispensing here with thoughtful, painstaking effort, careful study of the state of affairs in individual situations and comprehension and analysis of the full range of phenomena and events affecting the state of discipline within a crew. But the point is that it is precisely this approach which is the key to success in achieving any fundamental improvement in this discipline.

Concealed indiscipline.... Unnatural and untypical of our armed forces. There are no objective reasons for it. It is the result of deficiencies in the approach we take to our responsibilities, of the attitude the individual takes toward his own personal performance in discharging his duties and of his willingness to live

with deficiencies. But to deal resolutely with even the isolated case and to remedy the underlying causes of these deficiencies requires a deep sense of devotion to duty and a stern party conscience on the part of each one of us.

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ARMED FORCES

NEED TO CONVERT RELIGIOUS SERVICEMEN TO ATHEISM DISCUSSED

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 84 p 2

[Article by Major G. Ostreyko and Senior Lieutenant N. Gutsulyak, Red Banner Central Asian Military District: "Even If There's Only One.... Ideological Work: Experience and Opinions"]

[Text] The men were making their way back to the barracks along toward evening. You wouldn't have seen any of that joyous enthusiasm you'd ordinarily expect to see when people get some time off, nor was there the appearance of regret that the day off had flown by so quickly. They trooped along silently, gloomy-faced, each wrapped in his own thoughts. Private A. Medvedev alone was unable to contain himself, continually agitating ingratiatingly, looking for the chance to get a step or two ahead of his friends, Privates V. P'yankov and S. Zhukov, both military construction workers as well, so he could look them in the eye. He finally was able to hold it back no longer and was the first to speak:

"Be honest, now, did you have a good time? What an ebility our elder has, with God's help, to help the lost see the light, to fill the heart with love for the Most High! And his sermons! It was interesting, after all, wasn't it?"

"I was bored stiff," Zhukov replied gloomily.

"That's just because you don't understand anything yet; you're still living in your old ways, your old sinful, worldly ways," Medvedev started to explain in that same ingratiating way of his, but P'yankov cut him off.

"Do you really mean to say that everything worldly is sinful?" he inquired.

"That's right," Medvedev replied.

"So that means you think it's a sin to cultivate the fields and build cities? No, Medvedev, your philosophy's rotten and your beliefs are rotten."

So ended Medvedev's attempt to introduce his fellow servicemen to religion. In attempting to persuade P'yankov and Zhukov to visit the chapel "just out of curiosity," he had promised them an uncommon way to spend this time, something that would be "good for their souls," counting in the process on being able to appeal to the thirst for knowledge of these young men. But what these soldiers didn't know was that Medvedev was acting not on his own initiative, but rather on the instructions of the leaders of his sect.

It's an increasingly infrequent thing, now, to come upon a believer among us. But as was pointed out at the June (1983) CPSU Central Committee plenum, "part of our people are still to be found under the influence of religion, and, frankly speaking, it's no tiny percentage, either." This accounts for the fact that from time to time you'll catch the glint of a copper cross on the chest of a new recruit, and this then requires a major atheistic educational effort on the part of our commanders and political personnel.

Our constitution guarantees freedom of conscience. This does not mean, however, that we will be indifferent to the fates of people who have been intellectually numbed by religion. So much the more must it be said that we do not have the right to remain passive when we see the persistence and ingenuity some believers frequently demonstrate in their efforts to introduce one young man or another to religion.

One of the authors at one time served as a squad leader and can clearly recall an energetic, militant defender, you would even say propagandist, of religion, a Private Pavel Zol'nikov. He would take every possible opportunity to start up a conversation on some religious topic and go to any lengths to win over anybody among those around him.

The subunit's party and Komsomol activists were able to put up an aggressive defense against this kind of talk, but it was difficult for them to do this persuasively and conclusively. For the fact is that believers have to a great extent adapted themselves to the changing conditions in the world around them and have reoriented themselves accordingly. This very same Private Zol'nikov, for example, would never reject science in any discussion of religion; on the contrary, he would even say he welcomed its achievements and discoveries and would frequently use these to demonstrate the existence of God. He would look at history and denounce the obscurantism of the church; he insisted that each individual should choose his own set of beliefs on an entirely voluntary basis; therefore, he said, according to the tenets of the Baptists, the believer should be baptized only after reaching adulthood.

These discussions, of course, as is true of all religious doctrine, were targeted upon the simple-minded, upon people who had yet to mature ideologically and in their conceptions of the world around them. But while Zol'nikov's words failed to sway any of us, I must confess that none of us was able to move him either.

On one occasion, however, just as Zol'nikov was launching into one of these discussions with some of his fellow servicemen, Major A. Karmazin, the unit chief of staff, walked up. He listened to Zol'nikov a while and then asked:

"Now you say you recognize the role of science. But at the same time you warn that to 'immerse yourself in knowledge' is a harmful thing and an act directed against God. So, just what kind of science are you for, I ask, what sort of knowledge would you have us pursue?"

At this, Zol'nikov fell into a confused silence — he had no comeback.

With thesis after thesis, one powerful argument after another, the communist Karmazin exposed the tenets of the Baptist doctrine upon which Zol'nikov was expounding.

Then Anatoliy Petrovich pointed out to the soldiers one of the tricks Zol'nikov and others of his ilk employ in these disputations. In preparing for a discussion, they read... atheistic literature. This so as to "recharge" themselves with scientific knowledge and then later to be able to stand this information on its head in a confrontation.

Now of course, it was really no coincidence that Major Karmazin found himself involved in the discussion on that particular day. When he heard about this Baptist's rantings, the communist resolved to engage him in battle; so first he made his preparations, and then he picked a suitable opportunity. How important it is to develop a firm grasp of the subject of a discussion you're going to be having with a believer, to "disarm" him in the presence of others calmly and convincingly and to be able to demonstrate the bankruptcy of his religious beliefs and convictions without deriding them. And how pitiful by comparison the propagandist looks who is unable to find arguments any more substantial than the "that's-all-a-bunch-of-nonsense" variety. In the eyes of his fellow servicemen he will then stand helpless, while the believer with his references to science and his, outwardly, elegant, well-constructed logic and proofs will almost certainly be the one to celebrate the victory. So let's give some thought to the question of whether any hastily contrived statements on the part of the propagandist are ever really going to achieve anything.

To work with believers is a very delicate business requiring exceedingly fine tuning. All the more so as many of them take up a position of a wholly imaginary neutrality: they'll say they're not trying to impose their views on anybody and so they say they should be left alone. So you have to exercise particular tact when you approach one of these individuals and to keep in mind that this "gentle" behavior is frequently going to be an indication of the shakiness of his religious convictions and that it's probably still not too late to help the young man. What are important here are the tact and pedagogical skill of the officer, an ability to find the weak points in the believer's position and a healthy moral atmosphere within the military collective.

In this connection we would like to look at the following situation. Captain N. Gorshunov, the party organization secretary, learned that two believers had arrived in the subunit, Privates V. Svirzhevskiy and A. Gagin. He went to have a good look at the new arrivals and got acquainted with them. He was struck by the fact that while Svirzhevskiy was an energetic sort who was a good one to expound upon what he referred to as a "higher justice" and morality and to portray himself as a consistent fighter for this justice and morality, Gagin was the direct opposite. He was quiet, modest and industrious. He performed his duties and did his work with an eye always on Svirzhevskiy, as though he saw some sort of moral idol in him.

This idol, however, soon proved to be an egotistical, faint-hearted individual, a man who could demonstrate no courage or resolution. They assigned him to repair a vehicle one day, for example, and it was as though he did everything he could to drag out the job and keep the vehicle out of service as long as possible: what's the rush? he would say. Then another time they put him on a fatigue detail, and he immediately began to try to shift his own responsibilities onto to someone else's shoulders so he could find something easier to do.

"Now you're so proud of your morality, and you say believers are highly moral, hard-working people," Captain Gorshunov said, turning to Svirzhevskiy, in the course of

a discussion he was leading on the moral make-up of the Soviet soldier. "But what do your actions tell about you?"

He then proceeded to remind his audience of many of Svirzhevskiy's actions which clearly did not show him in a favorable light. The communist was able to demonstrate convincingly that church morality was shot through with hypocrisy from beginning to end. What is it you hear in the sermons? "We're not going to be good ones for fulfilling kind wishes." A man's not going to be able to decent and honorable and noble-minded — what kind of morality is that?!"

This particular discussion, other forms of atheistic propaganda and the justifiable criticism of Svirzhevskiy by his fellow servicemen —when you can put an end to your shirking, maybe you'll finally develop a conscience — all this gradually began to have an effect upon Gagin. He began to look differently at the man he had been idolizing as a paragon of morality as well as his religion; disillusionment began to set in. He finally declared publicly that he had broken with them.

When you think about these examples, you ultimately come to something like the following conclusion. Mankind has accumulated an enormous volume of scientific knowledge, and we have been armed with our Marxist-Leninist philosophy, an advanced ideology. So if you will simply be persistent and aggressive, undertake a thorough analysis of the foundations of a particular set of beliefs and then develop a firm grasp of its basic conceptions, you're not going to have any difficulty with your atheistic education. The problem is that we frequently either hurry through this or undertake it without any solid preparation. When we ask people how they're coming along with their atheistic propaganda we'll commonly hear them say they don't have any specialists for it. But anybody can become a specialist in this field if he works consistently at it. The most important thing is to remember that this is a broad field of activity which consists essentially in the development in an individual of an outlook based upon clear-cut, scientifically oriented thinking. Individuals so oriented are not going to fall for Bible fairy tales or allow themselves to be taken in by the "fishers of men."

But do we always take such an unyieldingly principled point of view in these situations? "Believers? No problem as long as they do a good job"—that's roughly how the reasoning went in the subunit where Major V. Yashenkov is deputy commander for political affairs and Warrant Officer A. Ryumkin heads up the Komsomol organization when they learned that the brothers Petr and Pavel Grishko were believers. And then as though this were the way to isolate them, to wall them off from the rest of the collective, they assigned Petr individually to do some repair work on some of the organizational facilities, and they made Pavel a vehicle driver.

Now behind all this lay a misunderstanding of the educational role the collective effort can play and an indifference toward the futures of young people who can without doubt still be diverted from the path of religion.

You will still occasionally hear people say: "Propagandize atheism? But we've got only one believer in the whole unit." The problem is that these comrades are forgetting that even though there is only one they still have undertake this effort, that they still have to work continuously to develop a cadre of militant atheists. This is why our people look upon the army as a school for life, a school for personal development, a school which will send a young man who has completed his term of service back home well tempered both ideologically and morally.

ARMED FORCES

MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIST EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 84 p 1

[Article by KRSNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Lieutenant Colonel A. Alyab'yev: "Courage Stronger than the Elements, Report from the Scene"]

[Text] Fighting its way against the powerful gusts of wind with some difficulty, the peppy little helicopter finally gained its altitude and set out on a course to the southwest of Gazli. The empty desert, occasionally lined with roads and power transmission lines, rushed past beneath the rotors. Within a quarter of an hour the helicopter commander, O. Panin, pointed down toward the ground — we had arrived. He took us through a sharp turn and set the machine down not far from some of the buildings on Sovkhoz imeni S. M. Budenny. During the night of March 19-20 an underground tremor had occurred which registered above 9. Roofs had been knocked out of place and walls brought down. Neat rows of tents now paralleled the ruins.

"Our sovkhoz got help," sovkhoz director T. Tulegenov told me, "within a few hours after the tremor. Members of the rayon earthquake disaster relief headquarters carefully analyzed the situation and took steps to see that sovkhoz workers were provided temporary housing and food. At the same time that they're rebuilding and restoring the damaged structures here, our workers are continuing to discharge their normal responsibilities."

A closer look at the situation here confirmed what the director had told me. Furious efforts were under way on the livestock farms. The brigades of construction workers were having to contend with an extra load.

Gazli itself, however, was the scene of the most intensive effort with respect both to scope and numbers of people involved. Arriving here now are brigades of welders, power engineers and turbine specialists from Krasnodar, Khiva, Ashkhabad, Kuybyshev and other cities of the Soviet Union.

We stopped for a chat with one of these brigades, a group led by Sergeant (Reserve) V. Marusev, at the main construction site.

"Service in the army has taught me and my comrades in the brigade how to take the true measure of a situation and given us the confidence that a truly cohesive collective can deal with any difficult situation," Viktor declared. "We responded to

the disaster which has befallen the people of Gazli as though we had been touched as well. The brigade is now full of resolve to spare no effort here."

And the people here have in fact spared no effort in the struggle to deal with the aftermath of the disaster here. The results of their self-sacrificing labor are here for everyone to see. The recovery cycle on most of the gas-bearing wells is now completed. The compressor station is now being brought back on line and electric power and communications are being restored.

The situation at earthquake relief headquarters reminds you of the atmosphere prevailing at a front-line headquarters. Crisp instructions and then timely reports coming in that they have been carried out. Civilians labor shoulder to shoulder with the military personnel here.

A group of men under the command of Captain M. Zernov were among the first to arrive at the scene of the disaster here. The ground would still shudder from the tremors (there have now been over a hundred), but they proceeded immediately to the task at hand. They began evacuating people from places which were still threatened, helped them save their belongings and set about pitching tents. Over two thousand of these temporary cloth shelters have now been set up for the people of Gazli. And most of this has been done by our troops. We thought we'd try to find out the names of some of those who have particularly distinguished themselves here, but when you actually start writing them down in your notebook you realize you'd never have enough pages. We'd like to mention a few, though, anyway. This list would have to include Senior Lieutenant V. Bisyukin, company commander heading up a shock brigade, Senior Lieutenant Ye. Volkov, Komsomol committee secretary, Senior Lieutenant F. Astakhov, platoon leader, Warrant Officer V. Dolgov, Sergeants V. Tserkovnyy and V. Il'in and many, many others.

Rescue troops have devoted particular attention to families with many children and families of front-line and disabled war veterans.

...Above the entrance to the small building where the earthquake relief people have set up their headquarters hangs the dramatic slogan: "The courage of the people of Gazli is greater than the force of the elements."

You can see the truth of this at every turn here.

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ARMED FORCES

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED IN ATHEISTIC INDOCTRINATION

Moscow AGITATOR ARMII I FLOTA in Russian No 6, Mar 84 pp 10-12

[Article by Capt 1st Rank Yu. Zverev, candidate of historical sciences: "Improve the Atheistic Indoctrination"]

[Text] Agitation: Timeliness, Aggressiveness, Effectiveness

The June 1983 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee pointed out the great importance of performing atheistic propaganda and indoctrinational work "with that specific group of the population, the believers." It underscored the fact that imperialism's ideological centers are attempting "not just to maintain, but actually to inculcate, religiousness, to give it an anti-Soviet, nationalistic orientation," and affirmed our resolve to stamp out all illegal activities carried out under the cover of religiousness.

The fact that communist ideology has undivided domination in the USSR does not mean that relics of the old ways and manifestations of harmful customs and morals have been stamped out in our society. We know that a certain portion of the Soviet people still hold religious views and illusions, which retard their social activeness.

All of this is reflected in one way or another in some of the youth entering the Soviet Army and Navy. This makes it necessary for commanders, political organs, party and Komsomol organizations of the units and ships, and the agitators to skilfully perform systematic propaganda of scientific atheism among the personnel. Atheistic indoctrination involves systematically and purposively influencing the individual for purposes of shaping a scientific Marxist-Leninist world outlook in him and overcoming religious delusions and prejudices.

There are numerous and diversified ways, means and forms of atheistic indoctrination. Lectures, reports, talks and evening discussions on special subjects certainly do not constitute the only means of achieving the objective. Our cultural and educational institutions are capable of performing extensive and beneficial atheistic indoctrination work. A very interesting and instructive evening of anti-religious discussion was held in one of the officers' clubs, for example. The participants were especially impressed with talks presented by citizens who had formerly believed in God and joined sects, but had later broken with religion.

A substantive evening discussion on the subject "Why We Broke With Religion," with the participation of such individuals, was held in formation "X." The speakers referred to M. Gor'kiy's literary works, "Moi universety"[My Universities] and

"Odin iz koreley respubliki"[One of the Republic's Kings], and A. Serafimovich's "Dve bozh'i materi"[Two Virgin Marys], "Chudo"[The Miracle] and "Tainstvo svyatogo prichashcheniya"[The Sacrament of Holy Communion], and others, the participants listened to and sensed an active, uncompromising atheistic stance, which revealed the beauty and the joy of man's creative, vital functioning in all the diversity inherent in the building of a new life.

Question-and-answer and filmed lecture evenings constitute a form of propaganda of scientific atheism, which has proved itself in the units and on the ships. The political organs ordinarily plan and conduct them at the officers' clubs or the unit clubs. They cover the following subjects: "The Origin of the Heavenly Bodies," "Science and Religion on Nature," "The Successes of Soviet Astronomy," "In the Outer Reaches of the Universe" and "Medicine in the Struggle Against Superstitions and Magical Healing."

Exhibits of books on atheistic subjects are extensively used in the atheistic indoctrination in the units and on the ships. V.I. Lenin's works, such as "Sotsializm and religiya"[Socialism and Religion], "O znachenii voinstvuyushchego materializma"[The Importance of Militant Materialism], "Ob otnoshenii rabochey partii k religii"[On the Attitude of the Workers' Party Toward Religion] and others are studied with the personnel. This permits the fightingmen to gain a more thorough understanding of the most important materialistic principles in this area and to develop solid atheistic views.

The agitators have an important role in the atheistic indoctrination. They conduct talks and discussions of books on atheistic subjects. Great interest was evoked by a discussion of Yemil'yan Yaroslavskiy's book "Bibliya dlya veruyushchikh i neveruyushchikh"[A Bible for Believers and Nonbelievers] in one of the subunits, for example. The oral agitation activists prepared special folders with clippings from interesting and substantive newspaper and magazine articles on atheism for the evening discussion and provided thorough commentary on them.

We need to especially stress the importance of performing individual work with servicemen who have not freed themselves of the religious influence or who have fallen under that influence. A relaxed and sincere talk by an agitator with such a fightingman, a respectful, well-meaning and sincere attitude toward him, constitute an irreplaceable form of atheistic work, the one which contributes most effectively to the rejection of religion by a young person who is a believer or is wavering.

Private V. Neyman arrived to serve in one of the military construction detachments. He immediately asked the command element to give him the opportunity to perform religious rites. It was learned that V. Neyman had attended services of the Evangelical Christian Baptist sect with his parents, who lived in the Western Ukraine, since he was a small child. It took a considerable effort on the part of officers in the unit political section, the commander and political worker of the military construction detachment, the Komsomol aktiv and agitators to bring Private Neyman to the point at which he exhibited his first doubts in the correctness of his religious views. These were followed by a break with religion. He was surrounded by concern and attention. Individual work was performed with him. This produced positive results.

The level of scientific atheistic propaganda depends greatly upon the attention given by the political organs and party organizations to the preparation of agitators and upon the assistance provided by them in the performance of the atheistic indoctrination. Schools for agitators, where classes in scientific atheism are conducted, have a large role in this. Special seminars are held for the oral agitation activists in many collectives. The coordination of atheistic indoctrination of fightingmen and workers with local party and Komsomol organs is increasingly becoming a part of the work performed by political organs. At joint assemblies and seminars the agitators and the political information specialists acquire the necessary knowledge and learn how to conduct tactful and well-meaning discussions with the students, not avoiding touchy issues and taking into account the subterfuges employed by theologians and sectarians.

One other matter--religious rituals. They are alive mainly because they are closely linked with the people's way of life and with many established traditions and customs. They can be overcome by extensively introducing the new, Soviet celebrations and rites. A book by Lieutenant General V.D. Serykh, published by Voenizdat in 1981, provides a detailed account of the great diversity of the marvelous Soviet military rituals.

In a speech delivered at a pre-election meeting of the electors of the Kuvbyshev Electoral District in the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses on 2 March, Comrade K.U. Chernenko, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, stressed the need "to resolutely overcome every sort of conservatism and stagnation." This applies to both religion and religiosity.

Religion will die out once and for all only as a result of successful communist construction, a systematic and determined ideological struggle against the class enemy in the world arena, and a tireless effort to enhance the communist awareness of the Soviet people and their atheistic indoctrination. This is why we must improve the atheistic indoctrination of personnel in the Armed Forces.

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ARMED FORCES

FIRE RETARDANT EQUIPMENT TESTED

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Mar 84 p 1

[Article by Major V. Moshkov, Order of Lenin Moscow Air Defense District: "Containing a Fire, Report from the Scene"]

[Text] A jagged, bright red tongue of flame shot with an ominous hiss over the fuel spilled out on the runway and up toward the frost-covered aircraft fuselage. And suddenly, an enormous fire was raging on the spot where an aircraft had been parked.

But why didn't the fire trucks which had come tearing to the scene not make any move to fight the fire? Why weren't the crews of fire fighters doing anything? And why, finally, did the officer pacing some distance away from the roaring blaze remain so calm? After making a few entries in a notebook, he waved to the driver of what at first glance was a really strange-looking machine.

And then something incomprehensible happened. The driver of this ungainly looking rig, which had been designed to clear the airport of ice, water and mud, drove the thing quickly right up to the center of the fire and from a nozzle on the truck shot a powerful jet of gas at the base of the fire. It knocked the enormous tongues of flame and clouds of black smoke away from the aircraft in an instant. Another instant later and the fire had been dispersed and suppressed by this powerful hurricane of gas. Only here and there could you see a wisp of smoke swirl up, and then you could feel the heat blown off the red-hot metal and the charred runway.

Now the reader will already have guessed that this, of course, was not a real fire, but rather only a test conducted on the body of an old aircraft which had been written off. It was a test the firemen refer to as a live fire test. But you'll have to admit that the test itself, which was conducted under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel-Engineer Ye. Ponimasov, fire marshal for the Moscow Air Defense District, was a little on the unusual side. Because it wasn't the regular equipment that would ordinarily be used to fight a fire that you saw here, but rather an ordinary heat engine the airport always has on hand.

This is one of the advantages. The powerful jet turned on the fire, which is composed primarily of noncombustible gases, reduces oxygen content to a minimum and instantaneously blows burning liquids off the runway concrete and away from the

surface of the aircraft. This method is particularly helpful because it creates conditions under which a pilot can be evacuated from his aircraft quickly.

The follow figures offer some idea of the potential of the heat engine: in live fire tests it put out fires some 250-350 square meters in area in 2-2.5 minutes. It extinguished a 500-square meter fire in 4.5 minutes.

...Another fire is now raging in the aircraft parking area. Dashing to a duel with the flames and suffocating smoke on Lieutenant Colonel-Engineer Ponimasov's signal this time is Private P. Kozlov, who drives one of the standard gas-charged mobile units. Quickly connecting a long metal tube to his hose, he opens a valve and a powerful jet of the nitrogen gas ordinarily used in one of the systems on the aircraft instantly hits the flame. I check my watch and observe that to approach and extinguish the fire using this, what you would call, handy mobile assistant, the soldier took only three minutes.

Nonorganizational fire fighters also demonstrated a number of effective methods of extinguishing fires on this particular occasion. Lieutenant Colonel-Engineer Ponimasov has developed a method of extinguishing fires using nonorganizational equipment which even involves the use of a gas jet from a jet engine nozzle to suppress a flame.

I recall a recent visit to the USSR Exhibition of National Economic Achievements. There in one of the display areas a working model was demonstrated many of the things I had had occasion to see at the airport. For his idea of using nonorganizational equipment to extinguish fires on open fuel spills at air transport facilities officer Ye. Ponimasov has been awarded the silver medal of the USSR Exhibition of National Economic Achievements.

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ARMED FORCES

OFFICER DISCUSSES MILITARY DISCIPLINE

Moscow ZNAMENOSETS in Russian No 3, Mar 84 (signed to press 24 Feb 84) p 10

[Article by Senior Warrant Officer Yu. Alekseyev, leader of "outstanding"-rated platoon: "The Power of Incentive, Military Discipline: Take In Everything, Influence Everyone"]

[Text] Private S. Tyutyunik, a what is referred to as a "difficult" soldier, had been transferred to our platoon. His former platoon leader, a warrant officer, expressed sympathy for me:

"You're going to have to put up with a lot from him. You just can't get him to see reason. Punishment doesn't even work."

I studied the soldier's personal record carefully. The back of it was in fact covered with reprimands; you could see it as the picture of a neglected field full of weeds. The front of it gave only the man's rank, name and the year in which he had been drafted. There was something suspicious about this picture: in all his time in the service could Tyutyunik really have not done anything to merit favorable comment? Is it possible that nobody noticed any industry or enthusiasm?

I began to observe the soldier closely. He was, of course, obstinate and egotistical to excess. It seemed a remark of any kind would stir him to stormy protest. On the other, though, he was an industrious troop; he knows his military specialty and likes it, and he doesn't leave his workplace until his job is done.

So I decided to give the man what support I could, and I did this by making use of forms of incentive provided for in the regulations and by showing him that the collective as a whole took a positive view of his contribution. Tyutyunnik was a little suspicious when he received his first commendation—he wasn't accustomed to receiving honors. And then, for getting some equipment repairs and maintenance done ahead of schedule, he soon received another award. Then he got written up in the organizational information bulletin. His comrades presented Sergey a book on his birthday. His "difficult" nature had begun to undergo a transformation literally before our very eyes.

Within a year the "Outstanding Soldier of the Soviet Army" badge was shining on the soldier's chest. Now this is the power of the incentive!

The commander's effort to guide the personal development of his men must, of course, incorporate a skillful combination of awards and punishments; but today I want to concentrate on the function of the award, the incentive—one of the important tools we have for strengthening discipline and exercising an influence on the soldier. Because I think we do not always know how to use this tool to the best advantage.

I looked up the word "incentive" in the dictionary not long ago and read that it means to stimulate a desire to do well, or to do better, by showing approval, with awards, assistance or sympathy. I think each one of us in a position of leadership should keep this definition in mind and not reduce our approach to incentive to the superficialities. But there is no concealing the fact, I'm afraid, that this is sometimes the case. Here's an example.

The platoon had organized a competition for the "best specialist" title. Private V. Mishin won. Now I was in a hurry to get to a meeting at headquarters, so I made just a quick stop at the shop where Mishin was working and presented him his banner. The soldier just rolled it up and put it in his tool cabinet. Not only did this "incentive" fail to inspire in Mishin a desire to do even better, a month later we had a hard time even finding the scarlet triangle. We racked our brains long and hard trying to think where it could have gone.

I told Warrant Officer A. Afonin about this incident. What did he think?

"Just think, now, a banner! Who in the world needs a banner? Now if you had just given him some time off, the award would have meant more to him. What else can a platoon leader do? You can give somebody a commendation, rescind a punishment previously imposed and grant him some extra time off—that's it. Try sparking somebody's interest with incentives like these."

But I don't agree with this view. A warrant officer, a platoon leader, disposes of a great many possible incentives; he has only to know how to use them skillfully to their best effect. For example, when we started presenting the challenge banner in a festive ceremony and then displaying photographs of the winning specialists in the Lenin Room, this really made an impression on our troops—it stirred their desire to be truly worthy of this honor.

We presented awards, for example, to PFCs A. Dmitriyev and V. Kozhukar and Privates N. Shamshurin and D. Matveyev, maintenance personnel who had distinguished themselves on tactical exercises. We awarded them commendations. We presented them with the "Best Squad" banner. And you should have seen the delight in their eyes as they were presented with these awards.

And extra time off? Does it mean absolutely nothing to the service member? I don't think so. We have a Private S. Fedorishchev in our platoon. He's a good specialist, but, as people say, he's inclined to be a little lazy. As long as you stand right over him he'll work. But as soon as you back off a little, you can expect no end of difficulties. No matter how hard I tried, I simply could not find the right approach to take toward him. But then I noticed that he was being increasingly frequently called to the check point, and then his name started showing up on the lists of those on pass or leave. So at this point I think to myself: he's probably met a girl. And I was right. His feeling for her was so strong that he began to ask for extra time off.

At that point I said to him flat out:

"Love's a fine thing, Sergey, but you've simply got to earn the right to extra time off."

Fedorishchev got the point. It was soon no longer necessary for me to supervise him so closely. So here's the conclusion I drew from the experience: you have to become more familiar with the individual, find out what his attitudes are, what he thinks like and then the commander's, the platoon leader's, authority, his right to dispense incentive awards becomes an effective tool to use in one-on-one work with the individual. And as far as leave time is concerned, his authority extends to decisions in this area as well. The regulations state clearly that if a commander feels that his authority is insufficient reward a subordinate properly, he can intercede for him with his own superior officer. And this is what I do if I think it's necessary.

At my request, for example, Private M. Septenov and other personnel have been granted short home leaves. The commander regularly asks me who I would like to reward and how and almost always supports my recommendations. For the fact is that we are both engaged in a common undertaking, that is, we are attempting to use the power of incentive to spur our men to strive for exemplary performance in discharging their patriotic duty.

The maintenance platoon I lead has led in socialist competition for many years now. It has experienced no breaches of military discipline. More than half of the men have achieved "outstanding" ratings in combat and political training.

I'm not trying to say that this is all due to my own efforts alone. I think, however, that positive comments from the platoon leader and the force of incentive awards have played an important role in the development of our collective.

...A short time ago we redid our Lenin Room. This was Private Tyutyunnik's initiative. In his spare time he put in a lot of thought and effort on the project. As I observed him I thought to myself: you just wouldn't recognize this soldier as what he used to be. Now he's successful in anything he undertakes. What does this prove? Once again, the power of incentive.

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ARMED FORCES

LETTERS TO ZNAMENOSETS EDITOR, RESPONSES

Moscow ZNAMENOSETS in Russian No 3, Mar 84 (signed to press 24 Feb 84) pp 18-19

[ZNAMENOSETS publishes replies to reader inquiries]

[Text] A Sergeant's Heroic Deed

For courage, valor and decisive action in protecting the life and dignity of Soviet citizens, the Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet declares, extended-service Junior Sergeant Viktor Aleksandrovich Baranov is awarded the Order of the Red Star (posthumously).

The words of the ukase now shine in gold on a corner display stand set up in honor of the peacetime hero, Viktor Baranov. In the center, an illustration by an amateur artist portraying the heroic deed performed by the junior sergeant.

We can also see his service records displayed here. All of them mention his industry and enthusiasm. It is difficult for a soldier to make it in the army without these qualities. Viktor served in a number of different units, including the Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan [Soviet capitalization]. One of the photographs shows combat vehicles cooling off after negotiating a difficult route through the mountains, while the troops have surrounded the field kitchen. In the center, there's Baranov, the cook, over a pot giving off an aromatic steam. The soldiers have their mess tins and spoons ready in their hands and smiles on their dusty faces. Viktor is smiling, too: "Just a minute, now, men, I'll get you fed. Just wait a minute."

Another photograph shows a column of vehicles making its way through a narrow ravine. A kitchen is attached to one of the vehicles along about the middle of the column. So Viktor's somewhere in the vicinity as well. He was also with his comrades during a halt when the dushmany attacked their column carrying provisions for the local population with motar fire. A shell fragment pierced a pot of boiling water, which then spewed all over the cook. He had to spend time in the hospital.

Baranov spent two months in reserve status and then returned to active duty in the regular army.

On this particular day, Baranov was heading back to his quarters after getting off duty at the mess hall. He met a girl he knew, and he and a friend were walking

her to the street car stop. Suddenly they hear a woman scream somewhere in one of the dark courtyards nearby. There were many people at the stop, and they all heard the scream for help. But Viktor was the first one into the courtyard.

...They took him to the hospital. But it was already too late for the doctors to do anything.

So on his birthday Viktor Baranov joined the ranks of those who have paid the ultimate price in discharge of their responsibilities. He had demonstrated by his entire life, brief but pure, that courage and valor know their objective. Viktor's father, Aleksandr Ivanovich, a front-line veteran who fought all the way to Berlin during the Great Patriotic War, knew this goal as well.

The Baranov home is never empty. People, fellow villagers, continue to come to pay tribute to the memory of this fearless soldier. Among those making their way to the Baranov home was S. Vostrikov, first secretary of the Astrakhan' Komsomol oblast committee, and Viktor's former comrades-in-arms. His father put on the awards he had been presented for his front-line service. A Komsomol representative presented him with a certificate attesting that the name of V. Baranov had been entered in the Komsomol Central Committee's Book of Honor. Pioneers from the school sent flowers. It was a moving experience to watch these 13 year-old youngsters swear eternal devotion to the heroic feat of their elder comrade and to keep alive the memory of it.

It was symbolic that the school Viktor had attended placed his photograph, too, on display along with those of the wartime graduates who did not return home. He is now in this company, because the courage, fearlessness and gallantry of extended-service Junior Sergeant Viktor Baranov ranks with the bravery of the front-line fighters of an earlier generation.

Major L. Malakhovskiy

Behind a Line in the Law--School of Legal Knowledge

"It is known that the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet has introduced a number of changes and additions to the law governing criminal responsibility for military crimes. I would like to know what prompted these changes and what provisions of the law are affected."

Warrant Officer N. Mikhaylov

Replying to this reader's inquiry is Lieutenant Colonel Justice A. Bilokon', trial judge advocate, office of the chief judge advocate.

I want to underscore at the outset that concrete moves are under way to refine existing legislation in connection with the adoption in 1977 of the new Soviet constitution. This effort is taking two primary directions: the promulgation of laws, the need for which is dictated by requirements associated with the economic and social development of a mature socialist society and the important changes occurring within the Armed Forces and the precise conformation of previously promulgated laws to the Basic Law of the state.

It cannot be forgotten that the aggressiveness of world imperialism, of U.S. imperialism in particular, is intensifying continually. In efforts to increase vigilance on the part of the Soviet fighting man, his discipline and organization and the personal responsibility of each member of the armed forces for the combat readiness of his own subunit and unit, measures of a legal nature must play their role as well.

Now to what changes and additions to the law on criminal responsibility should we turn our attention? First, to those provisions dealing with the military member's obligation to comply rigorously with regulations governing operational readiness and guard duty. The security of the motherland and the inviolability of our borders depend upon appropriate performance in these areas; therefore, all individuals assigned to perform a given military mission, and not the members of a particular operational relief alone, can be held criminally responsible for violation of regulations governing operational readiness.

Changes have also been introduced in provisions concerning malfeasance in office. A new article will cover a variety of forms of official graft and treat them equally with criminal nonfeasance. Criminal proceedings can also be brought for negligence if this results in substantial losses.

The new version of the law will contain an article establishing liability for violation of regulations governing relationships between service members between whom there is no superior-subordinate relationship. There is nothing more sacred than the bonds of military comradeship. And as we know, the regulations require each of us to cherish these bonds, to help our comrades by both word and deed, to restrain them from engaging in unworthy conduct and to be prepared to rescue them from danger at the cost, if necessary, of our own lives. This is also very important for the cohesion of a military collective and for increasing its fighting efficiency. And if these obligations are not discharged? The law establishes liability in the form of deprivation of freedom for up to two years in the case of physical violence against the person. But if the victim suffers bodily injury, or if there are other aggravating circumstances, the guilty party may receive an even stiffer sentence—up to 12 years' imprisonment.

Changes have also been made in the article establishing liability for abandonment of unit or place of duty. Officers, warrant officers and extended-service personnel will be held liable not only if they have been absent without authorization for 10 days, but also if without good reason they have failed to discharge their duties on more than three days in the course of a year.

All changes and additions came into force January 1, 1984. You can familiarize yourself with them in greater detail at your unit headquarters.

'I Want To Be Happy'--Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Under ordinary conditions I probably would never have written you this letter. But there comes a time in everyone's life when he needs wise and candid advice to be able to choose the proper course of action.

Let me begin at the beginning. I was called up for active duty with the Navy in the spring of 1981. I began my shipboard service at that time. I am a feldsher by training, so I was assigned to work that specialty in the Navy.

In October 1982, just before our ship left on an extended cruise, I was promoted to warrant officer, and I signed a five-year service obligation. After several months at sea, our ship returned to port and was turned over for repairs. I was then assigned to Kamchatka for further duty.

I liked my new assignment. I was soon granted my regular leave for 1983, and I returned to my hometown in Kalininskaya Oblast.

While I was home on leave I met and became friends with a very nice girl. She's in her fourth year at one of the institutes there. I like her very much. And she likes me as well. I now can tell I'm not going to be able to live without this girl.

Thinking of Svetlana keeps me from doing my clear-headed best on the job here. I long for her. Of course we can wait until she completes her work at the institute and then get married. But she's not going to come out here to Kamchatka. She wouldn't be able to get a job in her area of specialization out here. I've lost my interest in the military; it doesn't give me the pleasure it used to, and I'm not as enthusiastic about it as I used to be. To the contrary, I think I would do more good working my favorite specialization as a civilian than I'm doing here. I would like to be transferred to reserve status.

But how do you go about doing this? The period of service I obligated myself to is not up until 1987. I would write up a request to be transferred to the reserves, but I already know the commander would immediately remind me of my obligation. Or he would initiate action with higher authorities to have me demoted and reassigned to a regular period of enlistment.... But I just want to be happy.

If I had not met another human being who has become dear to me, I would never have written this letter; I would continued to serve as a warrant officer, and everything would have remained as it always was. But now I'm faced with a choice: a girl that I love or military service. And I want to be able to choose the first.

What should I do? Tell me. I simply cannot lose this one I love, choose the service and then be unhappy the rest of my life. You simply have to believe me: it's very hard for me to get along without her, the dearest person in the world to me now. I don't know what to do.

Respectfully,

Warrant Officer V. Grinev

FROM THE EDITOR: For entirely obvious reasons we have changed the name of the person who wrote this letter for purposes of publication. We think the problem he raised will be of interest to many readers. So let's hear from you readers: what would you do if you were in Viktor's position? What would you advise him to do, based upon your own personal experience or the experience of friends or fellow service members?

"Personal Truck"--ZNAMENOSETS Follows Up

In its September 1983 issue ZNAMENOSETS published a letter under this heading from Yu. Konorov, in which he criticized certain officials in an aviation unit for using their official positions for personal purposes.

The editors received an official reply signed by Colonel V. Novikov. He admitted that the criticism was justified. The unit commander had given Warrant Officer V. Vostrikov a severe reprimand for using an official vehicle for his own purposes. The subject of this misconduct was raised at a meeting of the unit's warrant officers. The guilty party has now fully repaid the cost of the gasoline he used while operating the vehicle.

At a meeting of the senior unit personnel, Captain S. Popov, Warrant Officer Vostrikov's immediate superior, was reminded of the need to root out and prevent any further abuse of this kind. The unit has also begun to monitor the use of personnel during both duty and nonduty hours.

'What Is the Cost of Negligence?'

We published a critical letter under this title in our October 1983 issue. It concerned deficiencies in the care and maintenance of tanks in the combat training group of X unit, which proved to be a consequence of negligence on the part of a number of senior unit personnel toward the discharge of their official responsibilities.

The editors have received a reply from Major General M. Tarakanov, deputy commander of the political administration of the Red Banner Kiev military District. He reports that this letter was discussed with commanders, political personnel and officers of the formation's [soyedineniye] technical services. The party aktiv met to outline measures to be taken to raise the level of technical competence of the organization's soldiers and NCO's and to upgrade the practices employed in maintaining and operating its military vehicles. The formation has also begun to give more attention to special instruction for its tankers and to improve its dissemination of technical information. Two new training facilities have been set up for driver training exercises.

The party organization of X unit has also heard reports from officer communists V. Yavlyanskiy, M. Rak and N. Kachanenko on efforts under way to remedy deficiencies in the technical training given formation personnel. The individuals responsible for the breakdown of these engines have been disciplined, and they have compensated in full for the material damage for which they were responsible.

Steps Taken--So This Is How They Store Them ...

Seaman A. Mikryukov (Red Banner Pacific Ocean Fleet) wrote to the editors that upon completion of his training he was transferred from his training subunit to a unit for his duty assignment. Warrant Officer [praporshchik] V. Lomeyev, the company sergeant major [starshina roty], collected documents from the new arrivals to be put in storage. Mikryukov was soon reassigned to another unit. It then turned out that his drivers license had been lost. This was six months ago.

Comrade Mikryukov has turned repeatedly for assistance to a number of senior personnel but so far without result.

The editors acquainted Colonel Engineer V. Volodin with Seaman A. Mikryukov's letter. It turns out that drivers licenses had been lost through the fault of the company sergeant major. The officer has assured the editors that this question will be resolved in accordance with regulation procedures. For negligence in the storage of official documents Warrant Officer has been severely punished.

Wrong Address

After he was transferred to reserve status, Warrant Officer V. Yashtylov returned to Kaliningrad (Kalinigrad Oblast), where he had been born and raised. He stopped by the military commissariat there to inquire whether his personal documents had arrived. "Wait," they told him. Another month went by, then into the second, but his papers still hadn't arrived. The people at the military commissariat advised him to send an inquiry to his old unit commander. Yashtylov wrote his wife, who had stayed on at her old job for a while longer. She went to see the people at unit headquarters, and as it turns out, her husband's papers had been sent not where comrade Yashtylov had requested, but rather to the Kaliningrad in Moscow Oblast.

"A fourth month has now gone by, and I can't register for military service. I've also lost my on-the-job-time continuity rights," the reserve warrant officer declares in his letter.

The editors have gone into action. Colonel V. Chernyy, the city military commissar in Kaliningrad, Moscow Oblast, has reported that the reserve warrant officer's papers have been forwarded to the residence of the author of the letter. At the direction of the political administration of the Red Banner Urals Military District, Colonel Yerizhokov has reported the following: disciplinary action has been taken against the guilt parties in this case, Captain I. Pestov and Warrant Officer L. Krapivin, who were responsible for sending these documents to the wrong address.

There remains one question unexplained in this connection: why in the world did officials at the central military commissariat in Kaliningrad (Kaliningrad Oblast) not make an effort to find these documents, and, when they received them, why did the people at the city military commissariat in Moscow Oblast, as it is said, pigeonhole them?

A group of female service members from one of the garrisons in the Red Banner Belorussian Military District appealed to ZNAMENOSETS for help in connection with inadequacies they had found in the quarters and facilities provided them. The editors received a reply from political officer N. Pechen': the complaint was justified in part. A number of deficiencies had been remedied, and steps were being taken to improve conditions for residents in these quarters. A short time later, however, the editors received a second letter, this time with 60 signatures, which declared that the problems still had not been solved and that the residents were still not in full enjoyment of everything to which they were entitled. Colonel L. Bekarevich acquainted himself with the situation. He reported that the facilities and equipment available in these quarters were adequate to support entirely normal living conditions.

The editors communicated with the political organization still a third time concerning this problem. A short time ago we received a reply. The command, political department and the chief of the local billeting unit finally took the additional steps required to eliminate the problems which led to the original complaint. The women living in these quarters have now met to discuss the situation. "There are no more complaints from the residents now," comrade L. Bekarevich has assured the editors.

You Asked, We Reply--To Warrant Officer A. Makeyev

You want to know if a one-time money award is paid for continuous military service, say, for the last year before retirement.

One-time money awards are paid only for complete years of service. According to the current Regulation on military Pay and Allowances, the one-time money award will not be prorated for time served.

To Warrant Officer A. Adamenko

'Our house management,' you write, 'has recently recomputed and then raised our rent. Is this right?'

We took this question to the Main Billeting Administration of the Ministry of Defense, where it was explained that rents are established by union legislation. Preferential rents for citizens in certain categories may be granted in accordance with and to the extent provided by current legislation.

In accordance with provisions of the law now in effect, rent for extended-service personnel and warrant officers is computed at the rate of 2.5 kopeks per square meter. This rate may not be raised or lowered regardless of geographical location, the quality of the apartment or the facilities in it or of the size of the tenant's family.

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GROUND FORCES

OUTSTANDING DEPUTY CHIEF PVO RADAR TROOPS PROFILED

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Mar 84 p 1

[Article by KRSNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Lieutenant Colonel I. Varfolomeyev of the Order of Lenin Moscow PVO District: "The Chief Engineer"]

[Text] Everybody who was present at this demonstration tactical exercise mentioned the high level of training of the specialists and the exceptional technical condition of the radar equipment. The fruitful labor of the officers group led by the chief engineer, Deputy Chief of Radar Troops of the Order of Lenin Moscow PVO [Air Defense] District Colonel Engineer L. Oleynikov, was reflected in this and other ways. The entire responsibility for training and technical support of the exercise was placed on them.

While preparing the exercise, officer Oleynikov resolved all questions which arose with the thoroughness and scrupulous accuracy that is his way. In this exercise the most characteristic features of his work style were apparent, and it's based on a profound competence and scientific approach to things and the ability to take into consideration the opinions of subordinates and to support any useful ideas and undertakings. A method for evaluating equipment parameters in accordance with generalized criteria was used in the exercise and provided good results. On the initiative of the chief engineer, a unit (which incidentally was developed and designed by a group of innovators under the guidance of Colonel Engineer Oleynikov), which automatically records the basic parameters of the radar equipment, underwent trials on one of the equipment types. The data which was obtained allowed the engineers to draw interesting conclusions and to develop recommendations directed towards increasing the combat resources of equipment.

Following graduation from the PVO Higher Engineering Radar School in Kiev, officer Oleynikov covered many official steps. And he always followed the rule: under any conditions and in any job study intensely and keep pace with the development of scientific and technical progress. He is fascinated with research and searching for more effective ways of operating radar systems. He devoted his candidate's dissertation, which was successfully defended, to this topic.

Studying and putting into practice everything new and long-range that is coming into being in the armed forces is a subject of particular concern to the chief

engineer. Not once has he had to hear: Lev Fedorovich's work place is not the office, but the radar "sites" and the station compartments.

At unit "N" he became interested in technical competition and, more precisely, the criteria by which the specialists' work is evaluated. And after a while his article, where the conditions under which technical competitions provide the greatest yield are based, appeared in the magazine "VESTNIK PROTIVOVOZDUSHNOY OBORONY" ["AIR DEFENSE MESSENGER"]. Today, with regard to the recommendations stated in it, technical competitions are being conducted in all the district's radar units.

Another time the chief engineer supported a technical innovation of Captain M. Povars and helped him complete it.

Officer communist Oleynikov isn't tolerant of passivity in people and indifference in work. One day at one of the "sites" he was checking the equipment which Major S. Vovkotrub's subordinates had serviced, and he observed a number of deficiencies. Moreover, periodic technical servicing had just been completed on the equipment. The chief engineer drew the conclusion: "So then, the operations were conducted in a slipshod manner." He gives no quarter to anybody for such an attitude towards things. He ordered political worker Major V. Nazarenko to assemble the subunit's [podrazdeleniye] active party members. The conversation was sharp, severe and uncompromising. They remember it there even up to this day.

And hence the joining together of high exacting requirements and a concern for people's welfare is one of the main traits of the character and work style of communist officer Oleynikov whose deeds and thoughts are subordinate to tirelessly increasing the vigilance and combat readiness of the district's radar troops.

At one time Lev Fedorovich had the occasion to serve at locations where his father--a regular officer who was in the Great Patriotic War from its first to its last day--had formerly fought. At that time, and in a special way, he realized more deeply that he is the son of a frontline officer and a direct successor to the things for which his father fought with a weapon in his hands. This motivates him to work with an even greater sense of responsibility.

Colonel Engineer Oleynikov was decorated with the Order "For Service to the Motherland in the USSR Armed Forces" Third Degree for performing his duties in an exemplary manner. His military labor was noted as well by the Order of the Red Star and a medal "For Combat Services" which at one time were awarded to his frontline officer father.

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GROUND FORCES

IMPROVEMENTS IN TANKER SIMULATOR TRAINING DISCUSSED

Moscow ZNAMENOSETS in Russian No 3, Mar 84 (signed to press 24 Feb 84) p 11

[Article by Warrant Officer A. Ovchinnikov, simulator class officer, Order of Lenin Moscow Military District: "For Maximum Benefit, Quality of Combat Training"]

[Text] To give training equipment a greater role in our tanker training programs is always at the center of attention among our combat training specialists. In the article we publish below Warrant Officer A. Ovchinnikov discusses the need for more efficient utilization of our motion-picture simulators and to improve the methods we employ in simulator-based instruction.

When the unit began to use simulators to train its new tankers a few years ago it encountered no small number of sceptics. The simulator confused some people because it was too complicated; others had trouble with the conditional, problem-oriented nature of the driving exercises involved, while still other individuals simply had trouble adjusting to the novelty.

It has rightly been said, however, that time decides all things. After a few months even the sceptics were saying the simulator was a good thing. The adoption of these devices has opened up important new possibilities not only for increasing the efficiency of our training programs, but also for economizing in the use of equipment, fuel and lubricant. Simulators have assumed one-fifth of the work load formerly performed by our combat training vehicles. What is more, over the course of a single training period a battalion training on simulators will save tens of tons of fuel.

Simulators used for the very earliest student drills are particularly efficient: preparing to start the engine, starting the engine, shifting the gears.... So now after a trainee completes his preliminary exercises on a simulator he's not going to "torture" a tank like he used to the first time he got in it. And you now have fewer mechanical failures to boot.

The introduction of new equipment alone, however, is not going to accomplish fully the task of improving the quality and efficiency of our training program. No less important are the level at which we organize and conduct our training and the instructional methods we employ.

How pleased we were when those ten new simulators were installed in the classroom! Because the more training positions we have, the more time we are going to have in which to train our students. That's easy enough to understand, you'd think. But no. We had only four instructors. This meant that a lot of equipment was going unused. So we asked ourselves how we could utilize this costly equipment more fully. We finally decided to recruit some sergeants from our training platoons to serve as assistants. It has now become the practice, upon instruction from the commander, for the unit to conduct courses to train these nonorganizational instructors prior to the beginning of each training period. This is a chance for these junior commanders to learn the equipment, the names of the various components of the simulator, the instructions for operating it and all the rules for accident prevention. When they pass their qualification test they are then authorized to conduct instruction.

The way things have turned out, these efforts have not been wasted. We are now using all the simulators we have. Moreover, each instructor is now responsible for fewer trainees, so he can give these budding tankers more individual attention. The trainees themselves have been able to see the improvement. It's now not so hard for them to spend another hour or so at the controls.

We also gave some thought to the question of what we could do to improve our instructional methodology. Formerly, for example, we conducted all our instruction in accordance with a single plan. The platoon commander simply divided trainees up among the instructors, who in turn explained the subject matter of each lesson to each trainee individually. This procedure, generally speaking, justified itself. Upon closer examination, however, it became apparent that this system was not always as efficient as it should have been, particularly during the very earliest instruction covering basic driving principles.

So now we have our training organized as follows. Let's say we need to learn how to shift gears and put the tank in motion. The instructor will demonstrate a particular operation for the trainees two or three times. More advanced trainees then seat themselves at the operating positions while the others observe. The future tankers have a chance this way to get better acquainted with the practical experience already gained by more advanced trainees and so to learn more effective operational techniques. Because while one trainee is practicing an operation on the simulator, the rest of them are analyzing his performance and mentally reviewing the sequence of operations.

This is the way we practice. Let's say we're just beginning an exercise. The schedule indicates the subject matter to be covered. But together with the particular platoon commander involved we give each trainee a specific additional assignment based upon past performance. This way we can make sure that he knows the time and performance scores to be achieved by the end of the training period. It goes without saying that this goal-directed, achievement-oriented preparatory training is an important factor in raising the level of personal application each trainee achieves during each training period!

Differentiated tasks taking account of the capabilities and characteristics of the individual trainee played their role here as well. Things would get more difficult, it is true, for those who mastered the material and the various procedures the fastest, because we gradually increased the load on them; this in turn required increasing effort on the part of the trainee. But by applying this kind of pressure we were able to observe the improvement in their skills before our very eyes.

In time, however, it got to the point where even these steps were not enough. I was somehow observing instructor Junior Sergeant V. Shutov conduct his instruction on one occasion. On the surface everything seemed to be going well: the instruction was well organized, and the students were applying themselves to their training exercises with great industry. I was nevertheless unable to rid myself of a sense of dissatisfaction.

It's true, I reasoned, the troops have indeed accumulated a certain fund of skills. But have these skills been mastered thoroughly enough? What was the missing ingredient in the last training period? The answer suggested itself: dynamic, well-thought through exercise problems which would create the necessary levels of stress.

I consulted with the instructors. In preparation for the next training period we devised some problem to raise the level of complication in the exercises. The trainees, of course, knew nothing of what we had in store for them. At the designated time they began their drills. The classroom once again filled with the drone of engines in operation.

But the drivers were suddenly confronted with a variety of problem situations such as: "Oil pressure has dropped to 0," "Water temperature has risen to 110° C" The tankers, who had just performed each one of the operations efficiently, now found themselves suddenly confused and disturbed. The speed with which they now performed these operations had dropped off considerably. Such was the effect the new situations had on them.

It was an object lesson for the instructors as well. They now began to put more effort into finding as many problem situations as possible to put into their exercises, unanticipated situations which these driver trainees might encounter while operating a vehicle. There began to appear a new confidence that no unanticipated problem would be able to catch these trainees unprepared.

The unit has indeed done a lot to increase the efficiency with which it utilizes its simulator facility. But we continue to look ahead, to look for more ways to make our simulator-based instruction even more effective. We do have our problems here, the main one being the personnel problem. We have yet to arrive at a final solution to the problem of improving the organization of the training we provide our instructors. We are now limited to the training we can provide taking account of the personnel and facilities presently available. This, however, is clearly inadequate. We're also short of specialized literature on methods. Nor do we have all the driver training films we should.

We have seen that simulators are the wave of the future. But to keep this future from receding too far into the distance, we specialists must put forth a consistent effort to insure that our students get the maximum benefit from each training period.

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GROUND FORCES

NEED FOR INNOVATIVE TRAINING METHODS, EXERCISES DISCUSSED

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Mar 84 p 2

[Article by Lieutenant General V. Kolesov, chief of staff of the Southern Group of Forces: "The Creative Work of a Headquarters Staff"]

[Text] This exercise was interesting both for Lieutenant Colonel Yu. Aleksandrov who directed it, the personnel of the battalion being trained and the group of forces staff officers who watched the operations of the tank crew members. The interest was caused by an important feature: the crews were striking the targets at maximum ranges.

Of course, firing tasks of that kind are solved in any exercise. But usually firing from medium and short distances also isn't excluded, and it is especially productive in its results. In the present exercise they decided to create a situation which forces the tank crew members to open fire at long ranges and they went along with complications which in actual combat may or may not be: while approaching the enemy, the crews there are firing continuously from all ranges. The desire of the exercise director and the combat readiness specialists was natural and logical in seeing what kind of result will be obtained and if there is a decisive importance in the first shot, and which in addition is fired at maximum range. In fact, on the battlefield the matter stands this way: whoever prepares the aiming round and firing more quickly also usually determines the outcome of the firing duel.

Is it easy to go along with experiments in a planned exercise where the battalion is receiving an evaluation on which, in many respects, the results of the training period and the meeting of one's commitments in socialist competition depend? It isn't easy. Lieutenant Colonel Yu. Aleksandrov and the regimental staff officers who had prepared the exercise had to be a little worried. The objective and creative work of the staff headquarters had preceded their departure for the field. They conducted special tank and rifle training, they made certain once again at monitored study sessions of the commanders' ability to manage the subunits [podrazdeleniye] and the firing, and they collectively discussed the methods for making intelligence operations more active and organizing cooperation. Party and political work was aimed so that personnel left for the exercise convinced of success. While not going into the details of the exercise, I'll say that the battalion executed its simulated combat mission.

It was evident that exercise participants experience deep satisfaction not only through the result achieved, but also through the very content of the simulated battle which is saturated with the elements of the new and the unknown.

Now, after some time, it's possible to speak also about this result of the exercise: Lieutenant Colonel Yu. Aleksandrov, who proved his worth with his organization, and other staff officers of the regiment became more daring and unfettered in their creative plans and searchings, and their interest in research became more keen. If earlier the staff workers of the group of forces had to direct them towards initiative-type solutions and experiments, then now we certainly have to study that which was born and verified in the regiment. For example, Colonels V. Dergachev and I. Yershov were specifically involved with this in the regiment. The recommendations, with which they provided a general conclusion of the regiment's experience, were met with interest by many of the officers.

I talked about an experiment that ended in success. But what if the result had turned out differently? Well, in this case the commanders, political workers, staff officers and all personnel would have received a wealth of material for analysis. It's impossible to raise the combat readiness of units and subunits and to open new horizons in combat perfection for personnel without searching and striving to exceed the limits of that which is habitual.

At the February Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee they talked about the necessity of showing independence at all levels, searching in a more daring manner and, if necessary, going along with a justifiable risk in the name of increasing our labor efficiency. Comrade K. U. Chernenko emphasized that it wouldn't do any harm also to observe the wise old maxim in searchings and experiments: look before you leap. But this doesn't at all excuse those who in general don't wish to consider changing conditions and the new demands of life. In a speech before the electorate of the capital's Kuybyshev election district, his words also rang in a sharp and timely manner about the necessity of overcoming all sorts of conservatism and stagnation.

Of course, they were also addressed to military personnel. Searching and initiative, particularly in a decisive segment of our activities, in improving field training and developing the skill among personnel with all their might to utilize new equipment are indispensable and obligatory conditions for success. Beaten paths and the pattern of combat training are contraindicated.

New means for waging combat are leaving a deep imprint on tactics. Tactics in turn are making new demands on equipment and armament and promoting their development and perfection. In the center of this objective process is a person--the researcher and the analyst. We often speak about the necessity to build combat readiness with regards to the latest achievements of military thought, but in this case we don't always emphasize that the living pulsation of an idea that has been sought must make itself felt not only in scientific institutions, major headquarters and directorates, but also in each regiment.

Life demands this. The efforts of commanders, political organs, headquarters and party organizations must be combined in searching for the most efficient methods of using equipment and weapons and managing units and subunits in the

dynamics of modern combat. And in this case the very history of the Soviet art of war is a wellspring of inspiration. It is rich with examples of a real investigative approach to matters of waging combat and operations and using the new fighting means and the increasing resources of units. Suffice it to turn to the period of the Great Patriotic War in order to graphically see how combat experience was learned and made common, in what easy-to-understand forms it was brought to the troops and with what firmness and consistency it was put into practice. The designing of combat formations and the methods of hitting an enemy with fire and utilizing artillery, tanks and aviation have changed. When we say that frontline experience hasn't lost its value and instructiveness even under modern conditions, then in this case, of course, we also mean the creative approach to the art of war which was affirmed during the days of the war and a decisive renunciation of that which has become obsolete.

In my opinion, a particularly broad field for creative work is open to headquarters staffs. They are called upon to be the generators of new ideas and centers where the searching for the most efficient methods of solving practical tasks is never ceasing. It is well known that the volume of information that a commander needs for correctly evaluating a situation has doubled or tripled in comparison with the period of the Great Patriotic War, and the time frames for assembling and processing it have been sharply reduced. Today the activities of a headquarters staff are simply inconceivable without automating and mechanizing management operations and putting equipment into operation which accelerates in particular the assembly, transmission and processing of information. In this matter a great deal depends on the creative searching of headquarters workers.

The tasks of headquarters have become more complicated in monitoring the quality of the training process and evaluating the results of military labor. Can we always have at our disposal complete and objective data concerning the state of affairs in all areas? Unfortunately, not always. It also happens such that he who relaxes his efforts in training and loses that which has been achieved is counted among the outstanding workers. And, on the contrary, the subunit, where training effectiveness and study efficiency have grown, remains unjustifiably in the background. How is one to improve work and to raise the effectiveness of staff management? The answer is flourishing in creative work.

As regards the direct organization of combat training and preparation for exercises, whatever their scale and objectives, then it's impossible to imagine this process without the creative work of staff officers and commanders of arms and services. If an exercise director didn't outline research tasks and if organizational work wasn't conducted in this direction in the subunits, then personnel are not prepared to leave for the field and the exercise will be inferior and indeed uninteresting. Great attention to some problem matters always has a positive effect on the nature and content of an exercise.

The recent exercise of a motorized rifle regiment under the command of Guards Lieutenant Colonel V. Grechaninov was significant in this plan. Matters were investigated in it which are associated with utilizing combat engineer subunits in the course of crossing a water barrier as well as organizing a march in mountainous and wooded terrain. The headquarters staff of the group of forces took part in the research. A special group headed by Major General M. Zarochintsev, and which included experienced and competent specialists, was singled out.

In our opinion, the decision on the march made by Guards Lieutenant Colonel V. Grechaninov turned out to be interesting. Helicopters, which were operating in the interests of the combined arms commander, were skillfully utilized for reconnoitering the march route and the monitoring radio posts became peculiar reference points on the unfamiliar mountainous and wooded terrain. There was also quite a number of other innovations which came into being thanks to the investigative approach to the exercise.

Unfortunately, it happens such that representatives of higher headquarters are not only not disposing trainees towards searching and experimentation, but also in every possible way they are reducing an exercise to repeating an approved one of the past. For example, recently in a command and staff exercise, unit [soyed-ineniye] staff officer Guards Lieutenant Colonel S. Dbar opposed the regimental commander's proposal to utilize sound ranging. The commander, he says, has enough other means. Further events showed that in this specific situation data obtained by the artillerymen would not have been superfluous.

In my opinion, the creative principle is still missing in the work of lower element headquarters. Thus, for example, Guards Major V. Bezsonovskiy and Guards Captain S. Vasin are battalion chiefs of staff and they think that their creative work is being reduced to processing the plans of company-level tactical exercises. But they didn't manage to reveal anything new in the exercise plans here. They were drawn up according to a pattern. It's strange that the commander and the headquarters staff closed their eyes to this.

"From a valid idea equipped with thorough experience to daring actions." These words of comrade K. U. Chernenko are mobilizing personnel towards tireless creative searching. In order to get off to new frontiers in combat perfection it's necessary to strengthen discipline, the state of being well organized, and order in each link of the military organism; to utilize all reserves; to be supported by popular initiative and to thoughtfully develop it according to the party principle.

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GROUND FORCES

SHORTCOMINGS EVIDENT IN TANK TRAINING EXERCISE

Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 23 Mar 84 p 1

[Article by KRSNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Lieutenant Colonel M. Lishniy of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany: "Through the Wrong Measure--Notes From a Tactical Exercise"]

[Text] While operating in the advanced guard, towards evening the reinforced armor battalion under the command of Captain V. Ryaboshtan encountered an "enemy" subunit [podrazdeleniye] which was hurriedly securing its defense at an advantageous position. The battalion commander made the decision to destroy the "enemy" with an attack on the move, to seize the position being occupied by them and to hold it until the approach of the main elements. After brief preparation fire [softening up] the battalion swiftly approached the "enemy." Cartridges and explosive packets which imitate the fire of the opposing side began to burst in the attackers' combat formations. Then the practice targets rose in the first line of defense: the "enemy" opened fire from all kinds of weapons. The tanks, however, while not opening return fire, approached the "enemy" and proceeded as if in parade formation. And only after having overcome the explosive minefields along wheel-track passageways, and while coming almost close to the practice targets, they plastered the "enemy" with a hail of fire.

Moreover, they fired primarily on the near practice targets. Meanwhile the most important targets--the tanks--were precisely in the depth of the operation. The attacking forces didn't hasten to shift the fire to that location. They waited for the time being also to shorten the distance to the gun targets. While developing the offensive to the depth of the operation, the tank crew members also subsequently moved with roughly the same "method."

The "enemy" suddenly launched an armored counterattack. The tank crew members had a chance of successfully repulsing it. But this didn't occur. It turned out that the crews had run out of ammunition.

"They're not accustomed to such stress in simulated combat," the battalion commander said after the exercise. "They didn't expect it."

Captain Ryaboshtan and the other officers attempted to explain as well the defeat in the simulated battle by the fact that the terrain in individual areas supposedly didn't allow them to scar the "enemy's" defense at great depth. Of course, it's impossible to concur with this. As it turned out, it wasn't so

much a matter of the terrain, but rather the simplifications and indulgences in the daily training of the tank crew members. There's eloquent confirmation for that.

An advance party (GPZ) didn't operate ahead of the battalion in this battle as required by combat regulations, and it didn't perform its proper functions. The personnel of the advance party had a "special mission": long before the attack, to "occupy" the trenches in front of the "enemy's" forward edge of defense and from there to conduct direct laying of fire and to "pierce" as much as possible the practice targets while the battalion's main elements moved forward for the attack.

Here's to what kind of indulgences the pursuit of a high percentage of target kills--and more specifically the pursuit of a high score--can lead.

I had to contend with a case of this kind at one of the exercises. The regiment was faced with waging a battle for a breakthrough of the "enemy's" strongly fortified defense. Prior to the battle the regimental commander began to define the missions more precisely and to give instructions to his subordinates on the basis of intelligence information that was just received. What a surprise it was when those doing the checking and I glanced at the blank operational map of Major Yu. Kharchenko, the regimental artillery commander: neither the "enemy" nor his own forces were plotted on it. But by this time the regiment had been in the combat situation for a sufficiently long period of time.

"So we were moving the whole time," Kharchenko tried to justify himself, "and therefore I didn't have time to plot the situation."

As the saying goes, let's leave an explanation like that on the officer's conscience. But one can't help but speak about the lack of exacting requirements and the absence of supervision on the part of the exercise director. In the present case, it was the regimental commander. It was thought that at the exercise debriefing he will strictly make the artillery commander responsible for the shortcomings and will recommend the officers devote particular attention to keeping the operational map under conditions of rigid time limits. But we heard something else. Major Kharchenko was rebuked: it's useless, they say, to show a blank map.

The idea shone through in evaluating the exercise results: whether it's worth stressing the matter. Indeed, it's just simulated combat.

These cases speak about considerable deficiencies both in the field training of soldiers and in the commander's training of officers, including the regiment's directorate. In fact, in an actual combat situation the subunits must be constantly prepared for solving the most complex tasks and, naturally, it's necessary for officers to react in an effective manner to a dynamic combat situation, to quickly reflect it on an operational map and so forth. In short, not to allow what is called "ebbs and flows" in the stress of simulated combat. Judging by everything, they're not following a rule like this in the regiment about which we're speaking.

It goes without saying that simulated combat and any other pursuit are not without objectively current and strictly defined conditionalities. But an experienced, exacting commander will always find the opportunity to bring a tactical exercise situation to combat reality as much as possible. He'll know how to saturate it with diverse, instructive features and tactical problems. He'll do everything to evaluate the training of his subordinates through a strict measure--the measure of combat. Certainly these truths aren't new. But the practice of winter training convinces one that it's certainly necessary to repeat them here and there.

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AIR/AIR DEFENSE FORCES

OFFICER CRITICIZED FOR DOWNGRADING MATERIAL IN ZNAMENOSETS

Moscow ZNAMENOSETS in Russian No 3, Mar 84 (signed to press 24 Feb 84) pp 28-29

[Article by ZNAMENOSETS correspondent Colonel V. Devin, Northern Caucasus Military District: "Comrade Kolomiyets's Veto, Following Up (Regulations being violated in X aviation training unit)"]

[Text] A publication will not often be found writing about the same thing over and over again. So from this point of view, the so-called "responsible" unit and subunit officers and warrant officers have definitely hit a streak of "luck." Within a fairly short period of time, our magazine wrote about them in considerable detail on two separate occasions (1983, Nos. 6 and 11). The practice of designating "responsible" officers was condemned in ZNAMENOSETS in no uncertain terms by competent sources in positions of authority, who explained in exhaustive detail why they believed it was a harmful practice.

Well, you would have thought that would be the end of it. The editors mail, however, shows that, alas, it's not over yet; there are still people out there who do not want to consider themselves bound by general service regulations. One reader's letter was so unusual that the editors thought it necessary to get a correspondent on the scene....

My assignment took me to an air training regiment constituting a component of the Kacha Higher Military Pilot School imeni A. F. Myasnikov. There I made the acquaintance of a Major G. Kolomiyets, the main "hero" of this unusual story and the subject of this particular letter. Now if the individual who wrote this letter is to be believed, the problem boils down to the fact that comrade Kolomiyets imposed his public veto upon the reading of ZNAMENOSETS. And those who have attempted to cite evidence from its pages he has labelled as, so to say unreliable people.

Unfortunately, I was not able to see Senior Lieutenant Engineer V. Yumashev, who wrote this letter to the editors: he had gone on leave. But that Yumashev was not inventing anything was unanimously confirmed by almost everybody who was present at the squadron formation that day, a truly memorable occasion for my interlocutors.

It all began when Senior Lieutenant Engineer S. Chernov, an aircraft technician, approached Major Kolomiyets on one occasion and said that he had read in a recent issue of ZNAMENOSETS that it was against regulations to designate "responsible" unit and subunit officers and warrant officers. Then Senior Lieutenant Ye. Murtazinov came up following Chernov with the magazine as well.

"At which point the comrade major," Murtazinov told us, "asked: 'Why are you bringing this to me?' The following day at formation, he 'explained' to Chernov and me in front of the squadron formation that we were using the wrong material, going to the wrong source, and that he was going to have to deal with us separately, because by making references to the magazine, he said, we were undermining discipline."

I honestly didn't want to believe what I was hearing. At first I simply could not absorb what Murtazinov was telling me, which was almost a word-for-word repetition of the letter. But then when I checked my notebook and counted up the names of all the officers and warrant officers who had confirmed what Murtazinov told (there were 17 of them as it turned out!), I thought: this ought to be enough to convince anybody.

Gennadiy Alekseyevich Kolomiyets himself nevertheless continued his repetition of the incantation: "I couldn't have said that. Believe me, I didn't say that...."

According to his version, he had only reminded them in the presence of the squadron formation that on the subject of the "responsible" officers and warrant officers, they were to take their guidance not from the magazine, but from the directions they received from superior offices.

So now let's let this assurance rest on comrade Kolomiyets's conscience. It is clear that in his attempt to exculpate himself he had lost touch with reality. He was prepared to deny everything without worrying himself in the slightest about how bad he was making himself look in the eyes of those around him.

An ability to acknowledge one's mistakes unhypocritically, no matter how painful and difficult this is, is an indication of personal courage. You can't conceive of a true without this quality. Not to mention a communist who is also in a position of leadership and authority, one who is supposed to set an example for others in always being able to account for his every word and deed.

Major Kolomiyets is the squadron's deputy commander for political affairs. So I just couldn't help asking myself: how in the world is going to be able to work with his people from now on? How is he going to be able to teach them anything now? For the fact is that a lot of people in the subunit had witnessed comrade Kolomiyets's cowardly, to be frank, conduct.

The days I spent here in this aviation unit helped me better understand why it is that other officers cling so tightly to their "responsible" officers and warrant officers and will go to any lengths to legalize this illegal new practice. The main good, in my view, that comes with the introduction of this practice is that the "responsible" officers are people you can shift your own responsibilities onto. If you have these people around in your subunit, your regiment or on board your ship it can relieve you yourself of having to worry about whether or not the life

and training of your subordinates has been organized in strict accordance with all regulation requirements. As we have already pointed out here in the magazine, they are given the role of duty officer and made responsible for conducting the party political activities as well.

Major Kolomiyets is to be found among the zealous defenders of the "institution of responsible officer." As unusual as it was, his response to the articles and point of view expressed in ZNAMENOSETS can easily be explained. In the position the magazine had taken on this issue Gennadiy Alekseyevich could see a threat to himself personally. He had gotten accustomed to a situation in which the "responsible" officers (and there were two of them on duty every day here) were responsible for just about everything that went on in the squadron. Accustomed to not having to trouble himself with the organization of everyday activities whose objective was to heighten conscious military discipline and the maintenance of a routine conforming to regulation requirements. The "responsible" officers were making it possible for him to do what he wanted to, not however anything directly related to his official responsibilities.

I was visiting the unit along toward the end of the month, so I inquired as to what the major had been able to get accomplished of the activities scheduled as part of his monthly plan of squadron party political work. He certainly had nothing to be proud of here. He had no idea, for example, what was to be discussed at the subunit Komsomol meeting. This despite the fact that, according to information in this political officer's own papers, this Komsomol meeting was only a day away. Of the 14 items which, according to the plan, were to have been accomplished by this date, the major could point to only two as activities which had been completed. The plan itself, it seemed, was being drawn up simply for the sake of appearances. Nobody was approving it, and nobody seemed to be paying any attention to it. And whether the plan was ever implemented, comrade Kolomiyets never seemed to worry a whit. But what was there to worry about? He had become accustomed to shifting the blame for any difficulties in the organization onto the "responsible" officers: Where was the problem? Where did you look? In cases like this the political officer was too strict: no leniency now.

Other squadrons have their "responsible" officers, too. I would say an entire formation of them is assembled each day: from the "responsible" garrison officer to the "responsible" subunit officers. And they probably get more attention than anybody else. In its own way, the following fact is eloquent evidence of this. On the second floor of the headquarters building hung a board with the following words at the top: "Training Schedule." But there was no schedule to be seen. There were no documents either, except for three ordinary sheets of paper on which somebody had typed the month's schedule for the "responsible" officers: those "responsible" for the garrison, the regiment and regimental administration.

I thought to myself: so it turns out that the training schedule is not as important as these schedules. There they hung in a neat little row, attracting the attention of everyone who passed by. All three had been prepared by officer Ye. Chernyshov.

In the course of our conversation Yevgeniy Ivanovich admitted freely that you're going to be much more at ease when you know that all the "responsible" officers the unit has are on duty. Hence this touching concern for schedules.

I found ready agreement that none of our Armed Forces regulations provide for any "responsible" officers or warrant officers. This practice minimizes the role of the NCO and daily duty detail in insuring that everything runs in accordance with regulations. There are other drawbacks to this innovation as well. For example, instructor pilots responsible for teaching their students how to fly are now deprived of opportunities to plan improvement the personal flight training program. When they have been designated "responsible" squadron officer (and this frequently twice a week) they will, of course, not be planning any flights.

Despite all this, officers in the unit here are clinging to their "responsible" officers and warrant officers with both hands.

"But what are we supposed to do without them? You could even say they've gotten into our bloodstream." — I heard comments like this not only from comrade Chernyshov, but from officer I. Saprin and other officials. They were as one in insisting that "we weren't the ones who introduced the practice of designating 'responsible' officers and warrant officers, and it's not going to be our responsibility to abolish it." I also heard people say they were only following orders from superiors. Try as they might, however, they were unable to support their reference to these orders with any concrete, documentary evidence.

I recall what I heard from Lieutenant Colonel A. Lyashenko, commander of the squadron where the letter to the editor originated (I should point out here that he had nothing to do with Major Kelomiyets's provocative "speech" to the squadron formation: he was on leave at the time). "I raised the question of doing away with these responsible individuals at one of our organizational meetings," the squadron commander told me. "But there were objections: these are orders from higher up, they said. The 'authorizing document' is on file at regimental headquarters."

So I then take it upon myself to establish that the squadron commander has been deceived: headquarters has no document authorizing the unit to introduce the practice of each day designating "responsible" unit officers and warrant officers.

I was shown, it is true, a number of official telegrams and other "incoming" papers which refer to these "responsible" individuals in a variety of connections. One of them, for example, points out that "responsible subunit officers are not discharging their functional (?) responsibilities." Another accounted for a particular breach of discipline by pointing out that "the 'responsible' unit officer was not present after taps" etc.

The people who are so free in firing off these telegrams of instruction are not bothering to consider the impression an official document concerning things which simply do not exist in nature, things such as "the functional responsibilities of 'responsible' officers and warrant officers" and other related phenomena, is going to make on the people who carry out these instructions. The truth, though, is that the originators of such documents are saying to themselves: "There, it's signed. So that's that."

None of these directives have directly authorized the practice of designating a "responsible" officer or warrant officer on a daily basis. But as I understand, they provided a powerfully tempting opportunity for some unit officers and convenient protective coloring for the introduction of practices which run counter to regulations.

Regardless of who I happened to be talking to, I would always pull out last November's issue of the magazine with the article published under the heading "More on the 'responsible' officer [Yeshche raz ob 'otvetstvennykh']". I would then ask whether this particular individual had read the article, which also happened to be accompanied by an official reply from Major General V. Yerminev, chief of directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces. His reply states clearly that "the practice of designating so-called 'responsible' unit and subunit officers and warrant officers runs counter to the provisions of general military regulations ... and cannot be justified."

It turned out that most of the officers here had not read the piece. This includes comrades Kolomiychuk, Lyashenko, Chernyshov, Saprin and others.

Isn't this strange? The people down at subunit level had been discussing material dealing with this difficult question at every conceivable opportunity for months. But no one at regimental headquarters had found the time, if only out of simple curiosity, even to take a look at the magazine to find out what their people found so interesting.

Now let us be frank: the comrades here are by no means the only ones to attempt in this way to get away with ignoring material contained in a periodical publication. And there are certainly other ways to hush up "troublesome" articles, but resort to these methods will invariably come at the same cost. The CPSU Central Committee decree "Increase the Effectiveness of Material Published in the Soviet Press" has some persuasive things to say in this regard. It underscores the fact, among other things, that "arrogant disregard of indicative statements in the press and efforts to place considerations of prestige or personal affront above the interests of the party and the state impair the effectiveness of the training and indoctrination of personnel and are incompatible with the high title of member of the CPSU."

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AFGHANISTAN

REPORT ON SOVIET OFFICER WOUNDED IN AFGHANISTAN

Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 84 p 3

[Article by Major A. Oliynik, Moscow--Ryazan--Tashkent correspondent of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA: "Courage"]

[Text] /Every time when the interests of the country's security and the defense of peace demand it and when it's necessary to assist the victims of aggression, the Soviet soldier is presented to the world as an unselfish and courageous patriot and an internationalist who is prepared to overcome any difficulties. These words, which resounded from the rostrum of the 26th CPSU Congress, can apply in full measure to communist and airborne officer Valeriy Radchikov, the grandson of a partisan of the Great Patriotic War./ [in boldface]

Far off on the horizon the summits of the Hindu Kush rose in silent grandeur. The pointed, snow-capped peaks sparkled and the glaciers were blinding. But here below on a basalt plateau near the Panjsher gorge the cliffs breathed heat. Only now and then a hot "Afghan" wind came in raising whirlwinds of dust.

A reconnaissance group of airborne troops led by Senior Lieutenant Radchikov was delivered by helicopters into the realm of the hot cliffs. A radio message from headquarters was extremely laconic: "Move out to the grid square and take the highest point of terrain."

At that early hour the plateau, which was surrounded by the jagged outlines of the cliffs, seemed lifeless and empty. But the airborne troops knew that the silence here in the mountains was deceiving. The group moved cautiously, footstep to footstep, with patrols out ahead and march security closing it up.

The fourth hour of the ascent along the mountainous slope had already passed. The hardly noticeable path for pack animals looped farther upwards.

Radchikov's command resounded along the mountain range: "Halt for 10 minutes."

This was the first halt during the entire trip, if one doesn't count the brief stops on the signals of the patrols. While his people rested, the officer decided to investigate the beginning of the path. While groping along the slopes with his binoculars, Radchikov pondered: "This is a handy place for a mine trap. And it's impossible to detour around it from either the right or the left."

He reported his coordinates by radio and the reason for the delay. Lieutenant Colonel B. Kerimbayev radioed in reply from the unit's headquarters: "Operate according to the situation."

Senior Lieutenant Radchikov was confident: each of the 10 persons going with him was prepared to carry out any command of his. Many of them had faced danger more than once. Each one was proficient in at least three military specialties and the methods of hand-to-hand combat and had mountain-climbing skills. There were also intelligence operations personnel in the group who are familiar with combat engineer work. But they learned about mines at the training range. Does a young soldier have enough experience and coolness when he encounters a complex explosive device?

Radchikov decided: "I'll go and check the path alone. Wait high in the mountains here for the combat engineers, so don't carry out the order on time."

He called up to Sergeant Aleksandr Kononov.

"You're remaining in charge of the group," and the officer removed the map case from his shoulder. He reminded him of the group's mission.

It was about 100 steps to the crevice from where the path began. At first Radchikov almost ran along the rocky deposits. Then, while clinging to each rock with a glance, he slowly ascended. Suddenly he saw a mine. Its yellow side was peeping out from under a pile of small rocks which was raked back with a combat engineer's probe. The officer determined: "It's Italian, antipersonnel and contact-activating."

He knelt and carefully examined the upper ridged casing where the brand of the mine is usually marked. It can tell a specialist a great deal. He blew off the dust and saw the index TS-50 and beside it the 2 Latin letters "AR". This meant it's a mine with an electronic fuse which has a self-destruction block unit and unremovable components. You just slightly move it from its place and it explodes. Radchikov removed a trotyl charge with an igniting fuse from his pocket and decided to destroy the mine by laying a charge of VV [explosives].

He was engrossed in the dangerous work and forgot about caution for a moment. As usual, while kneeling, he moved back and suddenly a terrible jolt from behind threw him to the rocks. The deafening explosion struck like a peal of thunder. And before darkness rushed into his head he had time to think: "I didn't notice the second mine."

When Radchikov opened his eyes, a black cloud was still hanging over him. He's alive! He slowly pulled his arms under himself and raised himself slightly on his elbows. His foggy glance suddenly slipped to his legs. A mute scream stuck in his throat: fragments of bone from his shattered legs emerged from the torn and scorched legs of his pants.

He doesn't recall very well how slowly he crawled down along the mountain path while leaving a little path of blood behind him. He didn't see how the airborne troops, having forgotten all about mortal danger, ran to him. But he had in his

mind forever the eyes of the intelligence personnel, when they said farewell near the helicopter which had landed miraculously on the plateau. While furtively brushing away sparing tears, one by one the airborne troops bent over the stretcher and silently shook his hand.

The last thing engraved on his memory from that day was how in the stuffy tarpaulin cubicle of the medical battalion Captain of the Medical Service S. Niyakin cut with his scalpel the twill smock which was saturated with blood and began to treat the lacerated wounds.

On 22 July 1982 Radchikov was air evacuated to Tashkent to the District Military Hospital imeni P. F. Borovskiy. Ahead of him were months of medical treatment and sleepless nights. Ahead of him was a struggle for life.

/"The overall condition of the wounded man is extremely serious. He's unconscious. Pulse is 120 beats per minute. Thready pulse. Third degree shock. Blood loss is nearly two liters. Explosive mine wound with limbs torn away at the level of the middle third of both shins. Patient was sent to the intensive care unit." (excerpt from the case record)./ [in boldface]

At the very first examination (the examination was conducted by the hospital's leading specialists Colonel of the Medical Service A. Gladkov and Lieutenant Colonels of the Medical Service K. Konstantinov and A. Karyuk) the doctors came to a conclusion: the airborne officer had few chances of surviving until morning. For the time being the extensive wounds fell back to the second plan. First it was necessary to bring the person out of shock: the acute blood loss of more than two liters by itself threatens a tragic outcome. They didn't manage this at once, but only after a week. These were days and nights of the military medics really battling for the life of a person.

Following each examination, the hospital's chief surgeon A. Karyuk was reassuring:

"The knees are intact, so we'll run, just be patient."

Valeriy endured. How, he doesn't know himself. When his consciousness returned, all his senses revived. And first and foremost his sense of pain. His body was burned by the fire (the fragments slashed his thighs and shoulders to pieces), but his legs were especially burned. The frenzied pain in his legs was beyond degrees. He, it seemed, felt his toes and he moved them. In order not to scream out, he clenched the sheet with his teeth.

When the crisis had passed, Radchikov was sent for treatment to one of the hospitals of the Moscow Military District.

He regained consciousness in the air evacuation "ambulance." A palisade of trees appeared for a moment beyond the windows and there was the smell of a coniferous extract. An unfamiliar person with kind eyes peering out from under bushy eyebrows was bending over him:

"Soon we'll be at our location and it's just a stone's throw from here to Ryazan."

This was the chief of the hospital's traumatological department Colonel of the Medical Service V. Kokarev. He thought about Ryazan because he knew that Radchikov had studied there.

The doctor's phrase "it's just a stone's throw to Ryazan" stirred up a whole range of feelings and memories in Valeriy. He loved this ancient city--the city of his dream and his love.

/Since childhood Valeriy had dreamed about becoming an officer. He grew up in the city of Ordzhonikidze which is in Dnepropetrovsk Oblast. He was brought up together with his younger brother Igor's (he also became an airborne officer) in a working family where admiration always reigned for servicemen. The war singed the childhood of his father Grigoriy Leont'yevich and his mother Antonina Antonovna. His grandfather was the commander of a partisan detachment in S. Kovpak's forces. And the heroic land itself of the area near the Dnepr, in the city and village squares of which obelisks silently rise to the heroes who were killed, also brought up Valeriy.

After the eighth grade he went to Kiev to the Suvorov military school for officer candidates. A year later he "fell ill" with the sky when he began to visit the republic's DOSAAF club and parachuted for the first time. He didn't vacillate in his choice of a military profession. It was just on to the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School imeni Leninskiy Komsomol. He became a communist here. From here he took the step towards the difficult path of a commander: at first he was the platoon commander of a parachute assault force and in a year a company was entrusted to him. Then service on Afghan soil in the position of commander of a reconnaissance subunit [podrazdeleniye].

Valeriy had intended to go on leave at the end of July. As the first order of business he planned to visit Ryazan where his wife and little daughter lived and to see his friends. The trip to the mountains interfered, and where too this fatal accident occurred near the Panjsher gorge./ [in boldface]

Radchikov slowly strengthened and the young strong body had its effect. For entire days from the elevated traumatological bed he stared at the window which was flung open. He greedily scrutinized life which was making noise around him. He rejoiced at it and then he braced himself in order to endure the next bandaging. But these weren't simple bandagings, but minioperations of their own. They lasted up to an hour and an hour and a half. He endured it all. The operating nurse Nina Kurmacheva was often left exhausted from the dressing. In a nurse's manner she said through tears:

"And just what is he made of? You bend iron and it squeaks."

Valeriy didn't feel isolated for a single day in the hospital bed. He received letters from his fellow officers and Senior Lieutenant A. Zhantasov, deputy commander for political matters, wrote especially often. He also turned to "KRASNAYA ZVEZDA" on behalf of all personnel. "Tell us about our commander communist Radchikov, the life of whom we consider an example for ourselves, and the things he's done, the firmness and the heroic deed."

His mother and father also came often to visit Valeriy. There's no denying they often cried in secret. Although it seemed that all the tears had already been cried out, every wound on their son's body also left the impression of a scar on the parents' hearts.

/"The Dushman tribesmen unleashed a real mine war on this long-suffering land. And it might happen that I won't be able to tell you my last word. And so remember that I don't have anyone dearer than you."

(From Radchikov's letter home to his wife and daughter)./ [in boldface]

Ol'ga Radchikova didn't find out about her husband's wound right away. An unknown woman--the mother of a certain soldier--brought the piece of news. While being upset, she opened the sheet: "Hello Olen'ka and Natashechka"--she skimmed the first words which were written in an unfamiliar, clumsy handwriting. The uneven lines frightened her more than the contents of the note itself: Valeriy always wrote neatly and with a legible hand. There were only the hospital's address and several sentences on the sheet.

/They had met by chance. Olya, who was then a student at the medical institute, was taking a walk with her girlfriends outside. A group of airborne cadets was coming towards them.

"Hey girls, come on and go with us to the dance at the military school," the slender fellow with the light brown forelock suggested in a jovial manner. This was Valeriy.

The year and a half of their friendship flew by unnoticeably. In May, 1976 they performed their wedding. Guests mainly in khaki uniforms--Valeriy's comrades from the ninth company--were seated at the table next to the young couple. They didn't stay very long, raised a symbolic toast, merrily shouted "cheers!" and began to say farewell: on this day the parachute jumps were going on at the school.

A daughter was born to the Radchikovs a month before her father put on his lieutenant's stars. Valeriy received an assignment to the Odessa Military District. For the time being Ol'ga remained with her parents and completed the institute. A year later she along with Natasha came to be with her husband, and with one wish--not to be separated from each other any more.

They spent four years together. They lived happily. One day, having returned late from the parachute jumps, Valeriy confessed to her: "You know, Olya, now and then while not even noticing it myself I return home on the double--I want to see you and my little daughter sooner."

At that time she still didn't know that a forthcoming separation was facing them. Shortly after, in accordance with his request, Valeriy received an assignment to one of the units of the limited contingent of Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

Ol'ga and their daughter moved to her parents. And she began to wait impatiently for a piece of news. All this time there wasn't any. Then a large affectionate

letter arrived. It had the feeling of being written in snatches and not on a single day. Valeriy wrote about the mine war in it./ [in boldface]

Ol'ga stepped over the office threshold of the chief of the traumatological department with anxiety. Colonel Kokarev knew from experience: it's always better if the patient's relatives find out from the doctor's mouth about the misfortune which has befallen him. But right now this difficult conversation delayed everything. He wanted to understand whether this woman who is frail in appearance will be able to bear such bitter news and whether she will be able to find within herself the strength to remain a reliable support for her husband in this difficult hour.

Vladimir Mikhaylovich unreservedly related everything to Ol'ga Sergeyevna. The tears silently rolled down her face. He didn't calm her, he understood: consolation right now was inappropriate. He also understood that this woman can't give up to the misfortune. The doctor wasn't wrong.

Ol'ga Sergeyevna spent many days and nights, and once at the moment of the next crisis for 12 days constantly, at the bed of her ill husband.

Months later in Tashkent Captain Radchikov tells me in a quivering voice: "Her Majesty Medicine and Her Majesty my Wife saved me."

/"When you meet people such as officer Radchikov, you're convinced once again of what alloy of the strongest kind communists like many real heroes in our armed forces are made. Indeed, communist Radchikov is of the same stock as [Hero of the Soviet Union] Mares'yev, and a person of this kind is invincible."

(From a conversation with Hero of the Soviet Union General of the Army Yu. Maksimov)./ [in boldface]

After the next crisis Valeriy lay in a ward together with Captain of Artillery Stanislav Vlasenko. And he couldn't help but marvel at his self-control. His legs had been amputated and his spinal column was injured (the result of serious trauma), but he didn't lose heart. He engaged regularly in physical therapy under the supervision of therapy doctor A. Kazenkov. Valeriy became attached to this person who was wise beyond his years. Following his example he took up gymnastics. Persistently and to the best of his ability.

During one of the sleepless nights Vlasenko said deep in thought:

"I have one way out--to find my place in civilian life. And what did you decide?"

Then for the first time Radchikov uttered the words which he later on repeated often: "I won't take off the military uniform."

The thought about returning to a duty status became stronger with each day. He decided to speak about this with the hospital's party committee secretary. Lieutenant Colonel A. Prisyazhnyuk supported the officer and advised him to send a report to the USSR Minister of Defense.

During the next meeting with his wife Valeriy said:

"We'll discuss it all later on."

He held out to her a sheet from a student notebook and a pen. And he began to dictate (he himself still wrote poorly) the words of the report to Marshal of the Soviet Union D. F. Ustinov which he had learned by heart and, it seems, which had been gained for a long time through much suffering.

It's a new year--1983. Radchikov met at the Central Scientific Research Institute of Prosthetics and Orthopedic Appliances (TsNIIPP). While conceding to Valeriy's persistent requests, he was transported to Moscow more than a month ago when the wounds had just barely healed over with scar tissue.

"When?"--with this question he followed in his wheelchair on the heels of the therapy doctor Anna Vasil'yevna Bobyleva. He wanted to stand up more quickly on the prostheses. But invariably he heard in reply: it's too early.

Radchikov understood that it's not worth hurrying a doctor. Anna Vasil'yevna is a recognized authority in prosthetics and an honored doctor of the republic. In due course she helped put Hero of the Soviet Union A. Mares'yev on his feet.

Meanwhile good things proceeded to carry on. At the beginning of January Valeriy was promoted to the next military rank--captain. Then came the decree of the USSR Presidium of the Supreme Soviet concerning his being awarded the Order of the Red Banner. He was presented the high award right in the hospital ward.

There was also one more truly happy day. One day among the other letters he saw an official envelope. "Your letter," he read nervously, "addressed to the USSR Ministry of Defense was considered in accordance with instructions at the main personnel directorate. A decision was made to find the possibility for letting you continue service in the armed forces."

Valeriy looked through the text a second and a third time. He turned away towards the windowpane covered with hoar frost.

Finally the prostheses were on his legs. It's true for the time being they're training ones. He waited five long months for this hour--to take a step once again on the ground. This turned out to be very difficult--to learn how to walk all over again. First of all, to stand and to fight down the pain which all of a sudden penetrates every cell of the body.

Valeriy stood for just a minute on the prostheses and he brushed the cold beads of perspiration from his forehead. Quite recently he easily had use of his body, he made a standing somersault and in a karate leap he laid out an enemy with his leg, but here he is now. He closed his eyes for a moment and took a step. Awkwardly, while standing with his legs wide apart and after having put his arms out forward. One step, and a second one.

"It may seem incredible," related the therapy doctor A. Bobyleva, "but Valeriy Radchikov mastered walking on the prostheses in an incredibly short period of time, in two weeks."

At the end of May, 1983 Radchikov was discharged from the hospital. It was almost a year after the injury. He walked hand in hand with his wife along the sunny Moscow streets, and most likely it couldn't have crossed anybody's mind that this young airborne captain was on prostheses.

Valeriy met the military medical board (VVK) at the military hospital in Krasnogorsk. The inquiry proceeded during the course of several weeks. The opinion of the doctors--Colonel of the Medical Service V. Abel'dyayev, Lieutenant Colonel of the Medical Service A. Zakal'skiy and others--was unanimous: he's healthy and fit for service in a nonduty status. The central military medical board of the USSR Ministry of Defense confirmed these findings. It was by way of an exception.

While signing the documents, the chairman of the TsVVK [central military medical board] inquired:

"Now where, to a military registration and enlistment office or to a school?"

"No, to Afghanistan," answered Valeriy.

Radchikov was at the sanatorium with his wife when they reported from the main personnel directorate that his going to Afghanistan was denied. A position in one of Ryazan's district military registration and enlistment offices is being vacated. Concur with it, they say.

Radchikov interrupted his rest and traveled to Tashkent to the headquarters of the Turkestan Military District. His request was only one thing: to remain in a duty status. The immediate commander Colonel I. Taushanov heartily supported Radchikov and interceded for him. He understood that the officer proved this right with his courage. But they didn't want to understand this at the personnel directorate. Then Radchikov appealed to the district's commander-in-chief General of the Army Yu. Maksimov.

We met with Radchikov almost immediately after his conversation with the commander-in-chief. Smart in appearance and smiling, he really radiated energy. And only perhaps the sharp wrinkles by his mouth and the weary look of his light blue eyes spoke about his past experience.

We lived for several days in the same room of the hotel. We talked over a great deal. During those December days Valeriy was in his pursuits all day long. But his eyes sparkled with joy: in accordance with the commander-in-chief's decision they sent him to serve in a staff position at one of the remote garrisons.

They say a person's life is measured by what he was successful in doing in it. In his 27 years, Major Radchikov (he was promoted to this rank quite recently and ahead of time) succeeded in a great deal and he didn't break under the burden of ordeals. And I believe he has a bright military career, to which he is so devoted, ahead of him.

END OF

FICHE

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